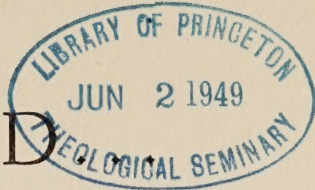


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John England, American
Christopher

JOHN ENGLAND . . . American Christopher

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JOHN ENGLAND



American Christopher

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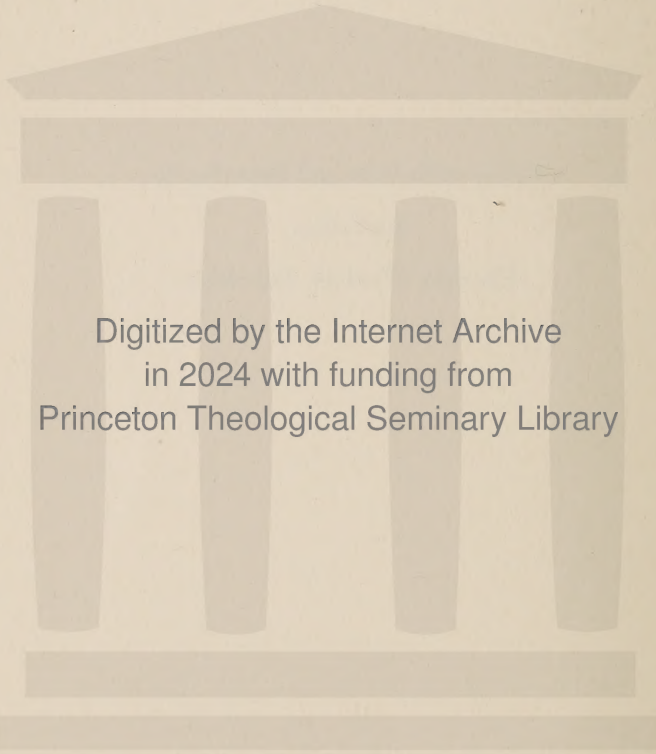
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DOROTHY FREMONT GRANT

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Given with love and devotion to
my father

FRANCIS MURRAY FREMONT



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*John, Bishop of Charleston, to the Congress of the United States,
Sunday, January 8, 1826.*

* * * *

He who beholds the evidence of truth and will not follow it is inexcusable; he who having used his best exertions for that purpose, and having with the best intentions made a mistake in coming to his conclusions, is not a criminal because of that mistake. . . . I have frequently asked myself whether, if I had only the same opportunities of knowing the doctrine of my church, and evidences, that many . . . have had, I would be what I now am. Indeed, it would be very extraordinary if I was . . . if the Roman Catholic Church were, in her doctrines and practices, what they have been taught she is, I would not be a Roman Catholic.

THANK YOU . . .

Miss Margaret Johnston, librarian, Haywood County Public Library, Waynesville, N. C., and the Charleston Free Library, Charleston, S. C., for the helpful co-operation extended me in my research for this work.

* * * *

Throughout, unless otherwise identified, all quotations, especially those used for chapter prefaces and chapter headings, are the words of John England.

CHRONOLOGY

SEQUENCE of high lights in the life of JOHN ENGLAND, BISHOP OF CHARLESTON, who was born in Cork, Ireland, *September 23, 1786.*

1802

At age of 16 concludes two-year study of law to begin preparations for the priesthood: tutored for St. Patrick's College, Carlow, by the Dean of Cork. "Of (his) years at Carlow there is but one tradition still living, that he was a hard student, fond of books, a good writer, and was to be found in all his leisure hours in the little library of the College." (*Life and Times of John England*, Guilday, Vol. I, p. 69.)

1808

OCTOBER 11. Ordained priest in St. Mary's Cathedral, Cork (then called North Chapel), by Bishop Francis Moylan (younger brother of General Stephen Moylan, aide of General Washington and Commissary General of the Continental Army). Date of ordination fell 18 days after John England's twenty-second birthday: he was granted a special dispensation by Pius VII; first priest to be ordained at St. Mary's which had been opened August 22, 1808.

First assignments:

Chaplain to the North Presentation Convent in Cork; the Magdalen Asylum; and prisoners of the city of Cork; lecturer in North Chapel (at that time instruction at Sunday Mass was given by disputation between the celebrant and lecturer: from this time John England acquired his reputation for argumentative skill and knowledge. Guilday, Vol. I, p. 78).

Initial activities following ordination:

Organized circulating parish library; founded a Catholic monthly journal, *Religious Repository*; became superintendent diocesan sem-

inary and instructor of philosophy and theology; inspector of poor schools of city; secretary to the Fever Hospital, secretary to the diocese of Cork, secretary to the Board of Examiners of candidates for Holy Orders.

1813

AUGUST 30. At Cork Catholic meeting, Daniel O'Connell urged that John England be named third member of a committee then born of the Veto Controversy. In this capacity Father England accepted trusteeship of Cork *Mercantile Chronicle* (an antigovernment newspaper), and acquired national repute as a fearless defender of Irish rights and Irish justice.

1815

Published in Cork, *School Primer of Irish History*.

1817

MAY 4. Appointed parish priest of Bandon.

1820

JULY 10. Received from Father Henry Hughes in Rome under date of June 12 word of his appointment to the new See of the Carolinas and Georgia. Apostolic briefs received August 12.

JULY 12. Diocese of Charleston, comprising North and South Carolina and Georgia, erected by Pope Pius VII.

From Bandon John England writes his first letter to his new flock directing it to "The Principal Roman Catholic Clergymen at Charleston, South Carolina, United States of America."

AUGUST 25. Resigns his parish at Bandon.

SEPTEMBER 1. First letter to Archbishop Maréchal of Baltimore written from Bandon.

SEPTEMBER 21. Consecrated in the Cathedral of St. Finbar by the then bishop of Cork, Dr. Murphy, assisted by Bishop Kelly of the new diocese of Richmond, U. S. A.

SEPTEMBER 24. In the Ursuline Chapel at Cork Bishop John England ordains to the priesthood Timothy McCarthy and Denis Corkery who volunteered for Charleston.

OCTOBER 22. Sails on the *Thomas Gelston* from Belfast for South Carolina accompanied by Father Corkery and his sister, Joanna Monica, who gave him £300 for his journey. On evening of December 27 ship reaches Charleston Bar; anchors up channel on

evening of twenty-eighth. Saturday, December 30, John England goes ashore and Sunday, December 31, celebrates pontifical Mass; publishes the bull of his consecration and preaches first sermon in his diocese.

1821

JANUARY.* Publishes his first pastoral letter and (15th) begins first visitation of his diocese which is concluded on December 4.

MARCH 1. In correspondence to the Metropolitan at Baltimore suggests for first time a provincial synod of "the Bishops of this Union." January 15, 1823, writes Maréchal he has given up all hope of the "common aid" of a Council. February 5, 1823, writes Archbishop: ". . . with respect to the Synod, I have done, I perceive it is useless to press it. But my convictions are still the same."

APRIL 14. Sends his first *Status Dioecesanis* to the Sacred Congregation.

MAY 8. Continues visitation going first to Wilmington, North Carolina, arriving May 15: accepts use of Presbyterian church offered by pastor and trustees. From here (17th) writes his first letter to Judge William Gaston of New Bern.

JULY 17. Arrives at Raleigh.

AUGUST 31. Arrives in Baltimore and calls upon Metropolitan (first personal meeting with Maréchal).

NOVEMBER. Visits Washington, calling upon President Monroe and Secretary of State John Quincy Adams.

NOVEMBER 22. Detained in Georgetown, South Carolina, victim of yellow fever epidemic "in which my life was nearly lost."

DECEMBER 5. Opens first retreat for clergy in Charleston.

1822

JANUARY 8. Opens diocesan seminary — "Philosophical and Classical Seminary of Charleston" for training of diocesan clergy and education of laymen.

JUNE 5. First issue of the *United States Catholic Miscellany*. Subscription \$3 per year in advance: suspended for lack of support with issue of December 25, 1822.

* "From January 1, 1821, to December 5, 1823 (Bishop England) gave 207 public discourses in his diocese in court houses; Presbyterian, Methodist, Baptist and Episcopal Churches and in homes of non-Catholics." (Guilday, Vol. II, p. 7.)

SUMMER. Published in New York an English reprint of the Roman Missal.

OCTOBER 9. Sends first report to Cardinal Fontana in Rome.

DECEMBER 8. Preaches in the House of Representatives, Columbia, South Carolina, "at the request of the Legislature" *in re* a bill presented to that body by the trustees of St. Mary's (Charleston) who did not capitulate until 1824.

DECEMBER 22. Advises Archbishop Maréchal he is proceeding with reconstruction of his diocese. Abolishes pews; forbids clergy to officiate in a church whose property is not in the name of the bishop. Churches then excepted from ban on pews those of Charleston, Savannah, and Augusta.

1823

SEPTEMBER 25. Constitution of the diocese of Charleston "published" in Church of St. Finbar, signed by clergy "and by many well-disposed laymen." First printed between Third and Fourth Annual Conventions Nov. 1825–Nov. 1826.

NOVEMBER 24. Calls the First Convention of the Roman Catholic Church of South Carolina at Charleston: resolution passed to print the constitution.

Fifteen conventions held at Charleston for the District of South Carolina 1823–1838; eight at Augusta for the District of Georgia 1826–1835; two at Fayetteville for the District of North Carolina 1829, 1831. Three general conventions of the diocese at Charleston 1839, 1840, 1841.

1824

JANUARY 4. *United States Catholic Miscellaney* resumes publication. Suspended with issue of December 20, 1825, because subscribers did not pay.

MARCH 17. Addresses Hibernian Society of Savannah in that city speaking on *Epochs of Irish History* (Works, Messmer, Vol. II, p. 398; cf. *Miscellaney*, March 24, 1824).

NOVEMBER 14–16. Second annual convention at Charleston.

1826

JANUARY 8. Addresses the Congress of the United States at Washington in presence of President John Quincy Adams, answering in part, prejudiced statements made by the president, July 4, 1821,

in Washington when he was secretary of state. (Sec'y Adams' oration in *Niles Register*, Vol. III, No. 515, July 21, 1821. Bishop England's reply, *Works* [Messmer], Vol. II, pp. 9-44, also extracts Guilday, Vol. II, p. 48 ff.)

FEBRUARY 6. Receives certificate of American citizenship in his name.

APRIL 2. Georgia organized under the diocesan constitution.

JULY 22. *United States Catholic Miscellaney* resumes publication. Continues to appear regularly now until Civil War days, holding reputation as leading Catholic weekly of country.

1827

JANUARY 10. Addresses the Literary and Philosophical Society of Charleston at the city hall on *The Religion and Customs of the Tribes of the American Indians* (*Works*, Messmer, Vol. V, pp. 104-159; cf. L. Farrand, *Basis of American History*, pp. 248-261, New York, 1904).

OCTOBER 14. Joanna Monica England, sister of the Bishop, dies in Charleston, victim of yellow fever epidemic.

NOVEMBER. Address Anti-Duelling Association in Cathedral at Charleston, *On the Origin and History of the Duel* (*Works*, Messmer, Vol. II, pp. 425-449).

1829

Sisters of Mercy established in Charleston.

MAY 15. North Carolina organized under the Constitution. Final draft of diocesan constitution printed ten years later, December 31, 1839.

OCTOBER 1. Attends First Provincial Synod held in Baltimore. Reports on same to Seventh South Carolina Convention, November 23.

1830

MAY 21. Reports by letter to Rome on state of religion in his diocese numbering 10,000 practicing Catholics in Carolinas and Georgia and 100,000 fallen-aways.

1832

MAY 9. Addresses the Literary and Philosophical Society in Charleston Cathedral, *On Classical Education* (*Works*, Messmer, Vol. II, pp. 337-370).

JULY 10. Sails for Liverpool, first of four journeys to seek aid from Europe for his diocese; returns to New York, September 21, 1833.

1833

OCTOBER 20-27. Attends Second Provincial Council in Baltimore.
 NOVEMBER 17. Tenth South Carolina Convention meets at Charleston.

DECEMBER 17. Sends two young men from his diocese to Rome. One, Patrick N. Lynch, became Civil War bishop of Charleston; the other, James Corcoran, later known as great theologian of the American Church.

1834

APRIL. Sails for Le Havre en route to Rome to report to Holy See *in re* Haitian negotiations. (Apostolic Delegation to Haiti appointed by Pope Gregory XVI impedes progress of diocesan works 1834-1836.)

DECEMBER. Returning from this voyage via Ireland he brings some Ursuline nuns from Cork to establish an academy in Charleston.

1835

JANUARY 3. Ursulines notify public of the opening of their educational institution in Charleston.

During summer of 1835 Bishop England opens a school for free Negroes of Charleston: closed February, 1836, as were all similar schools in the city, by public opinion.

JANUARY 21. Organizes the Roman Catholic Missionary Society of the Diocese of Charleston: began with sixty members, each pledged to give five cents a week.

MAY 19. In the Cathedral of Charleston gives a discourse on the *Nature of Religious Orders* (*Works*, Messmer, Vol. II, pp. 44-45).

1836

JUNE. Sails from New York on second trip to Europe to secure aid and personnel for his diocese.

1837

FEBRUARY. Sails on third trip to Europe to secure aid and personnel for his diocese.

1838

FEBRUARY 22. Addresses the Washington Light Infantry of Charleston on *The Character of George Washington* (*Works*, Messmer, Vol. II, pp. 303-336).

APRIL 27. St. Mary's Church destroyed in the Charleston fire.

1839

NOVEMBER 17. State conventions give way to diocesan convention. Second called November 8, 1840.

1840

JUNE 6. Returns to Charleston from Fourth Provincial Council held at Baltimore and proceeds to complete a visitation of his diocese interrupted by this. His appeals for financial aid among his flock fall on apathetic ears.

AUGUST 5. Addresses the Demosthenian and Phi Kappa Societies of Franklin College (established 1801, now University of Georgia) *On the Pleasures of the Scholar* (Works, Messmer, Vol. II, pp. 371-394).

NOVEMBER 11-19. Conducts clergy retreat at Charleston.

Too ill to continue his visitation to North Carolina.

DECEMBER 13. Opens annual retreat for laity in Charleston.

Last week of year, conducts retreat for French Catholics of the city, preaching every evening in French.

1841

FIRST WEEK. Conducts retreat for Sisters of Mercy.

APRIL. Catholics of Charleston, by a fair, raise \$4,000.

MAY 6. Leaves for Boston where on 16th abroad the *Britannia* he sails on fourth journey to Europe for funds and personnel for his diocese. Returns to Charleston December 4.

MAY 14. At request of Bishop Fenwick of Boston, delivers eulogy on late President Harrison (d. April 4) in Cathedral of the Holy Cross, *On American Citizenship* (Works, Messmer, Vol. II, pp. 66-75).

NOVEMBER 1. Arrives in Philadelphia from his fourth journey to Europe for the benefit of his diocese. Appeal in Ireland for financial aid, Sisters and priests extremely successful.

DECEMBER 9. Returns to Charleston after extensive speaking engagements in Philadelphia and Baltimore.

1842

FIRST SUNDAY IN LENT. Offers his last Mass.

MARCH 25. Directs a letter be written to the Archbishop at Bal-

timore regarding the "precarious" state of his health: advises all temporal affairs of his diocese are arranged to his satisfaction "and according to the laws of the State so that all things may be secure."

APRIL 10, SUNDAY. Solemn High Mass offered in Cathedral at Charleston for his recovery.

During week preceding, prayers offered in all Protestant Episcopal churches of the city and in the Hebrew synagogues.

APRIL 11, MONDAY. John England, Bishop of Charleston, died at 5 a.m.

1842

Metropolitan Catholic Directory, Vol. I, p. 550, "*Diocese of Charleston*," churches 14, churches building 3, other stations 47, clergymen on the mission 20, ecclesiastical institutions 4, clerical students 9, female religious institutions 2, female academies 2, charitable institutions 4, temperance societies 4, Catholic population 7000.*

* This figure considerably less than Bishop England's own estimates.
—D. F. G.

Introducing . . .

JOHN ENGLAND: AMERICAN CHRISTOPHER

* * * *

SOME months ago I discussed with one of our astute, contemporary Catholic lay scholars my intention to introduce John England to American readers. It was a mistake. Swiftly, tersely he reminded me that not one, but more than one of our clerical Catholic scholars have written of the first bishop of Charleston. He flatly informed me the task had already been accomplished adequately; that paper was still scarce and labor costs high. In other words, my intention was a waste of time and materials. It did not seem to occur to him that the profundity of the scholar, his erudition, his devotion to infinite detail, and his command of literary technique, while of measureless value, yet might result in keeping the Bishop of Charleston a comparative stranger to less scholarly and erudite persons like myself.

For a brief instant a wee glint of interest came to the eye of the Catholic layman to whom I had confided my intention. "Have you unearthed anything new on England?" he asked.

Before I could reply the glint in his eye disappeared implying that I had not. I was quick to verify the implication.

"Nor have I any hope, desire, or intention of doing so," I replied, shaking my head. "For that matter I cannot possibly include all the details, all the fine points which arduous research has already revealed."

Inwardly I wondered why it would be necessary to "unearth anything new on England" when what is now unearthed is

so little known. My companion pursed his lips and shook his head.

"Then why write of him at all?" he asked. "The late Monsignor Peter Guilday has done all that is necessary, all that can be done. He has exhausted every evidence. Do you expect to surpass *him*?"

For answer I looked the gentleman candidly in the eye. His question was obviously ridiculous. Were the Monsignor still among us and disposed to scan these pages my omissions would annoy this meticulous biographer; high lights important to me but not to him would encourage his impatience if he were given to this fault. I felt I could expect of a Catholic layman, however, a more sympathetic interest in the venture for we, the laity, should have in common one consuming ambition, namely, to arouse and sustain among Catholics themselves an external enthusiasm for our modern apostles and their message to a modern world. More, Catholics should have a proud desire to bring back to life the gentleman of Charleston who, above all other prelates of the Church in the early nineteenth century, demonstrated to Americans the truths of the Roman Catholic Faith while also instructing his widely scattered and hiding-their-light-under-a-bushel flock.

Now I began to suspect my companion's familiarity with John England.

"Have you ever read the Monsignor's work yourself?" I asked.

His eyes gave a negative reply.

"In his preface to Father O'Brien's work on the same subject," I went on then ignoring the negative look, "Monsignor Guilday admits that to reawaken the memory of John England was only a part of the end he had in mind when preparing his *Life and Times*, a two-volume work. Father O'Brien's contribution," I went on, "that is the Reverend Joseph L.

O'Brien, the founder and first rector of the Bishop England High School in Charleston, South Carolina, is deliberately not comprehensive at all. His material is drawn mainly from one major source. Therefore a precedent has been established for my deliberate omission of all the details and all the facts."

I felt this should "hold" the gentleman to whom I had mentioned my project, now with some regret, I admit.

We were interrupted then, and it was just as well. My dander was rising dangerously.

It is most certainly true that if the clerical scholars and historians of the Church in America had not paved the way for these pages they could not have been written: time and circumstance press too weightily upon me to permit the exhausting research which can be done only by one who has no family and home responsibilities to crowd each day. John England's mentioned biographers are the main support of this work. The Bishop himself once granted an adversary that if primary sources were not available, secondary ones were permissible. To have retraversed the same ground covered by Monsignor Guilday and Father O'Brien would have indeed been a duplication of effort and an implied lack of confidence in their scholarship. I merely present informally a Christopher who treked the Carolinas and Georgia a century ago, a prelate respected by all and loved by many regardless of creed. It is my ardent hope that, especially within the territory over which he had ecclesiastical jurisdiction, I will not again hear, from Catholic and non-Catholic, the question, "*Who was John England?* — Forgive my asking."

Even as we do today, John England watched American history in the making. More, he contributed to it. It was my own Carolina forebears, some of whom may have heard him speak, who gave me my insatiable love for this history, particularly the history of the region in which I have my home.

With maturity and research I have come to understand why interest in history, in former individual high lights of the American scene, is not more common, for my interest has led me through numerous works of history and biography and I have found many of the former discouragingly dull and lifeless. Yet the steady popularity of historical novels is proof enough that Americans are interested in the story of the past if only this story be given flesh, bone, and blood.

The forebears I mention, both of the North and the South, were practicing Protestants; so, nominally, was I until 1934. Since that time my interest in the history of my country has been renewed and deliberately reviewed for my Protestant background and education had omitted many Roman Catholic figures both lay and clerical and their enormous contribution to the formation of "the American way" — an oversight which I discovered so glaring as entirely to miss the classification of "accidental." This theme is very sketchily developed under the heading of "Exploration and Discovery" in my book, *What Other Answer?* It is this fact, then, namely the desire to know the whole history of my country rather than one side of it, coupled with the fact that my paternal forebears since early in the nineteenth century were North Carolinians, having emigrated from New England, which has given me the incentive to present the American, the southern gentleman, the scholar and patriot who was the first Roman Catholic bishop of Charleston.

By northern kin and friends I had been given to believe our own migration to the Old North State in 1946 was a great error, because they warned me, as a Roman Catholic, I would be a "lost soul" in Carolina. But is North Carolina, admittedly the least Catholic state of the Union, less Catholic now than were both the Carolinas and Georgia in December, 1820, when

John England arrived in the newly created diocese of Charleston? In this territory, covering 129,000 square miles, there were then 3600 Catholics in a population of 1,482,559: was Bishop England then a "lost soul"? At that time the first term of James Monroe, president of the United States, was drawing to a close. Thomas Bennett was governor of South Carolina and Elias Horrey was mayor of Charleston, one of the first, incidentally, to pay a courtesy call upon the new bishop.

Charleston was the social and political center of the South. It numbered 37,555 souls, about 1000 of whom were "lost," 3000 were free Negroes, 19,000 slaves. A very few of the 1000 "lost" souls could be termed practical Catholics; the odds of this world were too strong for any but the most steadfast to push against. Worse, among these souls in 1815 developed the Charleston Schism encouraged by unworthy priests and rebellious laymen. There was a church, St. Mary's, on Hasell Street between King and Meeting Streets, which had been incorporated in 1791 by an act of the South Carolina Legislature. This was but a year since that same Legislature had stricken from the state constitution the provisos that, "No person shall be eligible to a seat in the Senate, unless he be of the Protestant religion," and, "No person shall be eligible to sit in the House of Representatives, unless he be of the Protestant religion." But in 1791 no one other than Protestant religionists sat in the senate or the house of representatives in the state of South Carolina. Laws have not yet been written to sway the heart of man against his will.

Originally a portion of the see of Baltimore, the diocese of Charleston was erected July 12, 1820, by Pope Pius VII. As has been said, the total number of Catholics within the new diocese at that time was 3600. Twelve years later this number had grown to 11,000, dispersed as follows: 7500 in South

Carolina, 3000 in Georgia, and only 500 in North Carolina. To this date the Old North State has maintained a similar proportion of resistance to Bishop England's faith.

The Charleston Schism brought no glory to the Roman Catholic Faith in the Southland and Bishop England was sent to reverse the condition. Proud and firmly anti-Catholic, the Southland had no suspicion that his mission would succeed. He was welcomed with gracious cordiality, sympathetic friendliness and hospitality as Catholics are welcomed in the Southland today. Charleston, the City of Gentlemen, quickly discovered that despite his "corrupt" faith John England was a gentleman. After twenty-two years of shock after shock, amazement and astonishment, apprehension and respect that a Roman Catholic would presume to lift his voice in defense of the supposed moral degradation that was his faith, that a Roman Catholic would dare to presume to refute the false evidence of false history, the Southland buried John England with tears of love and admiration of every soul — "lost" and elect — within its boundaries.

Amidst these people Bishop England was no "lost soul" and he soon saw to it that not one of his flock would be so considered by fair-minded Americans. Did he accomplish this merely by returning lax Catholics to the Sacraments; merely by spending himself in the care of his small and widely scattered flock, never venturing beyond his own religionists socially or professionally? He did not. His chin was always up and out; his example, his leadership, his prayers, and his deeds were all directed to the chins of southern Catholics that they too, then and now, might always be up and out.

Interested in the performance of his assigned mission my first curiosity is, why was he so great?

Follow the story of his life and this question is answered on every page. Answered by his simplicity, his native humility,

his candor, his charity, his just temper, and, yes, his poverty. He loved every soul, gentleman and slave, Catholic and non-Catholic. So does his Master, Jesus Christ. His ecclesiastical contemporaries were not colorless prelates, they were the outstanding Church figures of their time: such readily recalled persons as Ambrose Maréchal, archbishop of Baltimore; John de Cheverus, later cardinal-archbishop of Bordeaux, then in New England. In New York was John Connolly; in Bardstown, Benedict Joseph Flaget. William Valentine DeBourg was bishop of the diocese which reached from the Gulf to Canada, from the Mississippi to the Rockies. Henry Conwell was bishop of Philadelphia and Patrick Kelly of the new diocese of Richmond. There were others such as Dubois of New York, Fenwick of Cincinnati, Portier of Mobile, Francis Patrick Kenrick and Peter Richard Kenrick, Rosati, Purcell, Bruté, Hughes, and Odin. Yet, avers Monsignor Peter Guilday, "*John England was the peer of all these prelates.*"

Why?

"Some he towered over intellectually," writes this biographer. "From the retrospect of years one might justly say he excelled them all . . . by all he was esteemed and by some loved."

Why? Do these assertions arouse no curiosity?

It is to answer the "whys" in simple words that the following pages have been written; not because, as my unsympathetic friend suggested, I have "unearthed anything new on England," but because, in the list of peculiar interests, I am curious: the more so, now, that I have met His Excellency, I have joined the group who love him.

What are the particular curiosities I would satisfy?

Not the origin of his name especially. It is strange that an Irishman should bear the surname England, but I once knew a fine English family by the name of Ireland. It is not the

name, but what made the man of that name as priest and man tower above his contemporaries?

Why did Protestant Charleston and a Protestant nation mourn his death?

How could he have reached such an outstanding place among a people whose descendants, even today, may consider a Catholic a "lost soul"? In his time the Protestant Crusade was rapidly mounting toward the pinnacle of ignorance of the 1840's. Many persons in the 1940's, demonstrably an era of state absolutism and atheism, believe that the pinnacle of ignorance is rising again to shatter and splinter in the form of persecution of American Catholics. If this assumption be true, John England's words are immediately timely for all Americans. It is true that efforts akin to those of the 1840's are still attempted, particularly by Communist tacticians who must divide before they can conquer. There are still published vilifying periodicals which to name is to publicize unduly. But there are others who hold that today after another century of Protestantism since John England's time, a religion whose only unity is a protest against his faith, the inevitable fruit of indifference has taken the effective starch out of such "crusading" antics: indifference which is inevitable when Protestantism as a religion is otherwise divided among two hundred and fifty-odd sects: a contrast to Communism, a state religion, which wherever it may intrude or flourish is united to one head, one authority, one source.

Did John England rise above prejudice and ignorance *because* of his faith, or *in spite* of it? This is a most important question to American Catholics in the 1940's.

Why did he wholly forsake Ireland and become an American citizen?

Why were Protestant pulpits always open to John England?

Because he compromised? Because for the sake of gaining a hearing he sometimes took the line of expediency? Never.

In his diary covering his initial years in Charleston he relates that on a Saturday evening following a week of lecturing on Catholicism in a Protestant church, the pastor of that church approached requesting a favor.

"I am sure you would not ask what I would not readily grant," smiled the Bishop of Charleston.

"Occupy my pulpit tomorrow," begged the Protestant minister.

John England showed no surprise. There was no horrified shrinking back, no shock. On the contrary his response was instantaneous and genial:

"I should be most happy to oblige you," he smiled graciously, "but are you aware that we can have no partnership?"

"I have thought of all that," replied the minister. "Regulate everything as you think proper."

John England looked at him keenly. He had an especial love for those children of God who through no fault of their own, but by a long heritage of propaganda, had been cheated of a greater heritage, that of the gift of Faith, the spiritual security, the contentment, and the joy which is the fruit of the true faith.

"I can promise you that nothing shall be said or done which you or any of your congregation will disapprove," he told his host.

This promise is the keynote of his popularity with Protestants. It was the basic rule of all his public discourses.

On the following Sunday morning John, Bishop of Charleston, arrayed in the full robes of his office, mounted a Protestant pulpit in a Protestant church, and facing a Protestant congregation, led them in singing some of their favorite

hymns. This, in America's Southland, in the early 1820's; a land that is today the anchorage of a deeply religious spirit, a land where the name of God is a conversational commonplace, a land where a public appeal to fundamentals never fails.

After there had been sufficient congregational singing to relieve any preliminary tension on the part of his audience, Bishop England read a passage from the Douay Bible; he invited the audience to follow him verbally in prayers taken from a book of Catholic devotion; and to this audience he preached a sermon, grounded in fundamental Christian principles. At the conclusion he dismissed the congregation with his blessing.

So, among one small group of non-Catholics, on one forgotten Sunday morning in Carolina, with charity, with dignity, with affection he dispelled the then prevalent idea that Catholicism was the "doctrine of devils." All could see that he, himself, was no kin to the devil for it was apparent he had neither horns nor a tail as might have been expected if the rumors of the centuries were to be believed, rumors, incidentally, which some scattered persons still, when opportunity offers, try to verify. All could hear this son of the ancient, "corrupt and decaying" Church speak the pure word of God for their comfort, consolation, and instruction. A Christopher — a Christ-bearer — had come to Carolina to stand before the heirs of Christian tradition who were, unfortunately, also the heirs of protesting errors concocted and circulated during the preceding three hundred years. This Christopher was articulate, gentle, firm, inoffensive, yet uncompromising, positive, and affectionate; an example then and now of greater benefit to his coreligionists than to the handful of protesting-against-Roman-Catholicism Christians who listened to him that morning with respect and astonishment.

Obviously of similar ambition I am also curious about Bishop England's apostolate of the pen. This he entered upon despite the frowns and criticism of some of the faithful. Twice he had to abandon this apostolate because American Catholics did not appreciate their need of it, hence did not support it.

Interested too, not in argument, but in revealing discussion, I cannot fail to pause over the arresting fact that John England, who closely followed the written secular word of his time, let pass no subtle suggestion, no direct slander, whether intentional or otherwise, against his faith. He did not like controversy, but unlike many Catholics, he did not avoid it when his faith or his flock required vindication. His apostolate by word and pen was not brief, carping or quarrelsome; it was directed by patience, temperately and thoroughly, and was always approached in the cordial spirit because, a student of factual history, John England could never forget that minds ignorant of the truths he presented were not so by their own free will. His demonstrations were so firmly anchored in the bedrock of reason and truth that opponents tugged at the anchor chain in vain, thoroughly alarmed and dismayed that "Truth crushed to earth shall rise again. . . ." It is not surprising that within twelve years of his coming to Charleston the number of Catholics in his diocese tripled. What is a tragedy is that by his own calculations four times that number had been lost to the faith, first, through lack of a ministry, and, then, through conventionally coercive association with Protestant sects—the great pressing human desire to "be popular," to be "socially accepted."

Lastly, I am curious about the Bishop's attitude toward domestic slavery. My own forebears owned slaves. What does my Church, speaking through John England who lived among slave owners, have to say about domestic slavery? This interest

must be of special concern to Catholics of southern blood. How much did John England influence contemporary southern thought in this regard?

The last slave ship which the New England traders brought into Charleston harbor arrived in 1808. This is not to say that the trade ceased at that date, but after that time, according to the law of the Union, to trade in slaves was an act of piracy. Did John England agree with the outspoken sentiment expressed by such southerners as Washington, Jefferson, Monroe, and Madison, and given quotable reproduction by John Laurens of Charleston, that "Americans cannot contend with good grace for liberty until they have enfranchised their slaves"?

Did John England in his zeal for the rights of man lend himself to one or more of the one hundred and three abolition societies which existed in the Southland in 1826 as contrasted with a mere forty in the North where so many purses split at the seams with profits from the slave trade?

He took an active interest in the abolition of dueling; surely he was no less interested in the abolition of another social malpractice.

We were thirty-one states in his day, and, as Lincoln lamented, "half slave, half free" — 15 slave, 16 free. Did John England agree with southern thought that while domestic slavery must be abolished it must not be done suddenly, so swiftly, and without the proper educational preparation of *Black and White* that a social and economic slavery would follow, this a far worse scourge than the blight of domestic slavery itself? Did he question the sincerity of this southern attitude when his own efforts to provide educational and vocational training for the Negro met with bitter opposition from the white citizens of Charleston? Did he anticipate the horrible disruption of the Union with its inevitable consequent

social and economic slavery for the Negro which began with the boom of cannon over Fort Sumter, the fuse lighted by the temper of southern blood resentful and indignant over the self-righteous dictation of the North?

Did he foresee possible secession from the Union over this issue? Did he sympathize with the proud blood of the South which determined to handle its own family affairs in its own way?

An ardent American patriot, he must have been disturbed by previous threats of secession from the Union, foreshadowed by the express reservation of the right of secession made by New York, Virginia, and Rhode Island in adopting the Constitution. Did he recall in his deliberations on domestic slavery that in 1790 both North and South had petitioned Congress for abolition and Congress refused to act on the premise that such federal legislation would conflict with the rights of individual states? And yet in that very year, over a matter of state debts and the location of the capitol of the United States, Massachusetts led all of New England in a threat to secede.

For a reason later to be revealed, some of these questions must remain unanswered — but not all.

On the whole, my curiosity has assumed a wide range because John England was a Roman Catholic and an American. Of interest certainly is the spiritual guidance of his socially cowed flock, his missionary journeys by steam packet, stagecoach, snatches of railroads, and “gigs”; his genial mingling with Protestants who behind their cordiality entertained the basest notions of his faith — all of these interests are the incentives of this work. Some of the “misunderstandings” of his time have carried over to our own day in the Southland. To know precisely the misconceptions which he faced, both historical and traditional, should be of assistance in aiding his

followers to carry on his mission in his territory today. Herein there will be a particular development of the origin of the historical "misunderstandings."

Others could have lived 156 years instead of the fifty-six God allowed to John England and not have accomplished the merest fraction of what he accomplished. His writings alone, not including his sermons, fill five volumes of double-column pages in fine type.

If the reader would know these works in detail, let him consult them — providing he can find them: published by his successor in 1849, they have been long out of print and forgotten. If he would know in extensive detail Bishop England's pre-American background, and many of his accomplishments beyond the diocese of Charleston, let him consult the extensive work of Monsignor Peter Guilday.

But if the reader be an American citizen, especially living in or having connections in the South; and if he be curious about the mind and background of one, who though now dead for over one hundred years, still speaks in the modern vernacular about problems still timely, because they are timeless; if he be curious about one whose influence both patriotic and spiritual can still profit American Catholic life, it is hoped this work will arouse him to further research, and inspire him to "go and do likewise."

An author approaches an historical figure with caution — that is, if that author believes, as I do, in survival after death and ultimate reunion. We are responsible for all our words, even our idle ones, but we are particularly responsible as our words draw the character and report the actions of one not present to read his own lines for himself. As previously in other works, so now I write of Bishop England in the full knowledge that in eternity it will be possible for me to meet him face to face. Should such good fortune be mine, to that

meeting I shall take his own words, written to the Rev. Mr. Fuller, Baptist pastor of Beaufort, South Carolina, with whom he corresponded at length after that gentleman made a public and derogatory assertion relative to Roman Catholic practice which was provably contrary to fact:

You tell me that I have disappointed you:
I regret it; but I must say that you have
not disappointed me.

Waynesville, North Carolina

Feast of the Epiphany

January 6, 1948

♦ ♦ 1 ♦ ♦

After several years' experience, after having been in twenty-one states of the Union, in every description of society; in the city and in the forest, from the table of the President to the hut of the Indian; and having proclaimed the doctrines of [my] church in the halls of legislation, in the courts of justice, in the churches of those who opposed it, in the crowded steamboats of the Mississippi, and in the woods of Kentucky, to every description of hearers, [the writer] feels it a solemn duty to declare his conviction that whatever he may feel to be their doctrinal mistakes, the American people are most religiously disposed, and most inclined . . . to treat with courtesy and kindness every well-conducted clergyman that goes amongst them. . . . Undoubtedly there are exceptions . . . but it will . . . be often found that the fault originated rather on the side of the preacher than that of the hearer.

* * * *

We are safe under the protection of our Protestant fellow citizens. We are safe under the guardianship of those who are neither Catholic nor Protestant. We are safe under the protecting genius of our free institutions. We have no fears, though it has been fashionable to insult us, and though we are still treated with a contumely which is flung upon no other portion of our fellow citizens. For this Catholics themselves are greatly to blame, for they have frequently exhibited too much of the spaniel, and whilst they continue to act like spaniels they will receive that obloquy which is due to meanness of character, rather than to the virtue of humility as taught by their religion.



May it be a morning of resurrection to us from prejudice and error . . .

Editorial, *Charleston Courier*, April 12, 1842.

SLOWLY the April dawn drew the dark secret of night from the slumbering city of Charleston, South Carolina. With the faint light the tall masts of the ships lolling in the harbor reappeared. Not so their owners, merchants of the city, who slept on. Aboard the ships were Negro hands free and slave, none free to step ashore but held to the decks by the stringent laws adopted by the Legislature following the threatened insurrection of twenty years ago.

Over the brick-walled gardens of Charleston the humid air hung, enervating to man and beast, but refreshing to oleanders and pomegranates, fig trees and grape vines, orange trees and sweet olive, myrtle and gardenia. Roses and honeysuckle scented this April air; the magnificent shrubbery stretching forth leaf and branch with vibrant spring enthusiasm to welcome the early rays of the sun. Myriads of land birds; some brilliantly colored, others modestly drab; the songs of all, sweet or shrill, greeted the Monday morning exuberantly.

At five o'clock only the house servants stirred, reluctant to waken to another day and so indifferent to nature's gay welcome of the dawn. This welcome would become muted into the ordinary noise of daylight hours by the time the gentry stirred—they had yet another few hours of slumber before them. It would be the cries of the fish hawkers, rising from the dark and narrow streets which would awaken them. Walled by her gardens, Charleston's streets were so narrow by deliberate design in order to exclude as much as possible the "maleficent and dangerous" sun.

In another few weeks the planters would come into the city to remain until November, so escaping the "fever of the country." Those now here had temporarily interrupted their spring planting to celebrate Easter, the feast of the Resurrection. It had been a mild, humid, sunny Easter day — the whole city bedecked in a riot of new spring blooms. There had been numerous social gatherings after morning services. Long into the twilight, guests had relaxed on the many long piazzas which stretched the windward side of every brick mansion and wooden cottage to catch the never-failing cool sea breezes, Charleston's one compensation for her enervating climate.

Before the gentry so much as thought of bestirring themselves on this April morning the hand of God passed over Charleston leading into eternity one of her cherished citizens. His touch was not harsh as during a yellow fever plague or a hurricane such as that of 1804 or as by the all-consuming fires by which Charleston was purged at intervals — 1740, 1798, 1835, and yet again in 1861. Even so, the hand of God rested heavily upon the city that Monday morning. Yellow fever had been survived, hurricane and fire had been overcome, but no industry of slave or gentleman could restore to the morality and culture of the city John England, Charleston's first Roman Catholic bishop, who, between five and six o'clock on the morning of April 11, 1842, slipped his hand into God's and went forth from the city to witness that which his eye had never seen nor his ear heard nor the heart within him imagined.

That some dire calamity had befallen the city the slumbering gentry realized an hour or so later as the minute guns of the harbor rudely brought them to full consciousness. All the bells in all the steeples of the city's churches tolled a mournful message adding to the din of lamentation. Only the Friday past, Good Friday, Charleston's Episcopalians,

assembled in St. Philip's, St. Michael's, and the newer St. Paul's had prayed God to restore Bishop England to health. For six weeks he had lain ill, his last Mass having been offered at St. Finbar's the first Sunday of Lent. Prayers were offered in the synagogue to the same effect: John England was only fifty-six, surely God could spare him yet a little while? Constantly during Holy Week and on the feast of the Resurrection the Catholics in St. Mary's and St. Finbar's and in the little church on Charleston Neck implored the merciful God to restore to them their beloved bishop — or if not, then to grant him a happy death. It was this prayer which God answered quietly, peacefully, gently, just as dawn broke on Easter Monday. John England's mission was accomplished; his assignment competently completed, he had earned the reward for fidelity and loyalty: God summoned him to receive it.

Emotion overwhelmed the city and stunned one and all to inactivity. Business stood still, shops remained closed, fish hawkers sat disconsolately along the wharves, their wares spoiling in the hot sun. People reacted as though death had visited each individual household. Flags flew at half staff. No loaded ship moved from her mooring. Stevedores idled the day long as other ships so recently across the bar waited for their attentions. Every judge stepped down from his bench that day as courts assembled and adjourned in one hushed breath. The governor of South Carolina in the city to review the militia dismissed the various companies to their liberty. The Washington Light Infantry returned gloomily to their headquarters — the one who for twenty years had been their chaplain was dead. Over all, the minute guns monotonously boomed the news which no human being could alter.

Only the newspaper offices remained open, and for weeks to come continued to carry eulogies and condolences relative

to the departure of John England as these came from all over the Union, from Washington, and the Northwest Territory, from New Orleans and Boston, and beyond, from Ottawa and London, from Paris, and from Rome. Quick as fingers could pen them the presses rolled off the epitaphs and eulogies — “Paul of the Union” — “Chrysostom of the South.”

Charleston in her long history had witnessed many scenes to stir the emotions. Here Washington had visited, and Jefferson and Lafayette; here presidents and diplomats had been entertained, but none of these past events had roused the wave of emotion and so extended the columns of the *Charleston Courier* as had the passing of the Roman Catholic, John England.

He was distinguished for strength of mind, power of argument, deep and various learning, and a bold and impressive eloquence [wrote the *Charleston Courier*] and was justly ranked among the intellectual and literary ornaments of our city. . . . He sympathized deeply with the free institutions and the glorious destinies of the American Union, valuing it as the home of his oppressed and exiled fellow-countrymen, and the chosen temple of rational liberty. Of the South he was a true friend and an able champion; fearlessly throwing the weight of his character, influence and intellect in favor of her much misunderstood and much reviled domestic institutions, and vindicating them both at home and abroad.

The next day normal human reaction set in with the editor of the *Charleston Courier*, bespeaking his sincerity, for in yet another tribute to Bishop England, he became rather flowery and poetical as indicated by . . .

In the death of Bishop England, true religion has lost a friend, for true religion is not in the form but in the heart. . . . May it be a morning of resurrection to us from prejudice and error; to him a new life beyond the grave, where he will “see as he is seen — know as he is known” and meet the welcome of “well done, good and faithful servant, enter into the joy of thy Lord.”

Dr. Kenrick, coadjutor of Philadelphia, hastened to the

stricken Catholics of Charleston to preside over the funeral of John England on Saturday, April 16. His body had been taken to St. Finbar's the evening of the day he died. For the remainder of that week throngs viewed it daily, the gentry and the poor, the slave and the free, the aristocrat and the fish hawker. At the scene of the burial, two caskets, side by side, were lowered beneath the Bishop's chair in the cathedral — one that of the Bishop, the other that of his beloved sister, Johanna Monica, who had come to Charleston with her brother in 1820, expending her small fortune for their passage and the establishment of his household. During a visitation of yellow fever in 1827 she had died and was buried in St. Mary's Churchyard. Now her remains were enclosed in a new casket and laid finally to rest beside the brother she had so loved in life. As the two caskets were lowered out of sight the pent-up grief of Charleston, Catholic and non-Catholic, gave way at last, unrestrained, and the burial was completed "mid the piercing shrieks of assembled thousands."

Said the *United States Catholic Miscellaney* of that date: "Every faculty of mind or of body which he received from his Maker he dedicated in life to His service, and he completed the oblation by dying the death of the missionary, death because of the zealous performance of arduous duties."

How many Christians could be bid farewell with such a benediction?

.. 2 ..

There are in this city public teachers of lengthened visage and of demure physiognomy, from whom you could no more extort a smile than you could conversation from a statue; men who hate the Catholic religion with as virulent rancor as it is possible to cloak under the semblance of zeal; men who make long prayers and speak foul untruths; men who are more holy in their own estimation than they are in mine.



Americans are not obstinate heretics . . .

THERE are persons given to sweeping pronouncements born of warped imaginations. Among these are some, usually “foreigners” to the region, who hold that the greatest animosity for Roman Catholicism in America is still found in the Carolinas and Georgia. If this be true, it is a major discredit to John England and his successors: perhaps, too, it may be due to a neglect of the published works of John England now long out of print. If it was true in April, 1842, then the display of regional, not to mention national, grief at his passing was no more than hypocrisy: and, of this, southerners cannot stand accused.

In 1820, Charleston, South Carolina, the City of Gentlemen, was a proud metropolis, rich and prosperous, cherishing the unalterable conviction that she had cradled the young Republic; a conviction which George Bancroft, then twenty years

old, would later sustain in Chapter XIV of his *History of the United States*. The gentlemen of Charleston held other iron-clad convictions, too, among them that government must be controlled by the intelligent, the cultured, the educated, the responsible and patriotic — by the “upper crust.”

These gentlemen paid great deference to age. They honored persons of character such as John England, and those who, like him, rendered meritorious public service. The St. Cecilia, begun in 1737, was the ultrasocial organization — to be dropped from its membership was a social disgrace from which there was no recovery. The gentlemen of the city were formal in address, at ease with a courteous manner; the ladies always charmingly, faultlessly polite. Divorce was beyond the pale in Charleston society, and man or woman so involved had no acceptance regardless of personal blood credentials. The gentlemen were flash tempered, quick to resent a trifle yet proud and generous, faithful friends, and lasting enemies. Rigid in conformity to social conventions, they could at times display that scornful indifference to convention which is ever a characteristic and privilege of the well born when such disdain is disciplined by careful discretion. Practically without exception the gentlefolk of Charleston were scholars, much traveled, well read, and very much of the world.

Charlestonians believed that liberty could be preserved only by excluding from government the voice of the ignorant and improvident. The Charleston idea was nearsighted, the City of Gentlemen suffered a superiority complex; it was a portion of its inheritance.

Originally comprising the three states of John England's diocese, Carolina, presumptuously claimed by Great Britain, was endowed by Charles II with unusual privileges. Landing at Cape Fear the English took “seizin by turffe and twigge” and proceeded to establish a “nobility” in order to avoid a “too

numerous democracy." Lord Ashely prepared the "Fundamental Constitution" leaning heavily on Locke for guidance, and the "nobility" was established not by blood but by cash. Land was offered at a penny an acre. A baron was he who bought twelve thousand acres; a cacique purchased twenty-four thousand; a landgrave, forty thousand. Charles II was careful to stipulate that the "nobility" were to have titles dissimilar to those in England.

The manners of the gentry were more European than elsewhere among the colonies; the characteristics most applauded were intelligence, refinement, and hospitality. The dominant fear of the "nobility" was the elbow-rubbing inclination of democracy and its effect on the "minor morals called manners."

A century previous to John England's arrival in Charleston, George Whitefield, the fiery, loyalty-switching missionary, so obstreperous in New Jersey and on Long Island, was invited to the region by General Oglethorpe. Whitefield horrified the "nobility" of the established Church of England which brought him to trial for the "frenzy he excited among the people," and more especially for the "bitterness and virulence wherewith he raved against the clergy of the Church of England." Such censure did not deter the missionary in his "inspired work," and at the conclusion of his tour, citing as evidence the frequent and devastating plagues of yellow fever in Charleston, he gave her a motto: "chastened, not yet corrected."

After duly reporting Whitefield's trial to the bishop of London, the Reverend Alexander Garden of the Church of England, wrote of the effects of his visitation to a friend abroad: "As to the State of Religion in this Province it is bad enough, God knows. Rome and the devil have contrived to crucify her 'twixt two thieves, Infidelity and Enthusiasm. The former, alas! too much still prevails; but as to the latter, thanks to God, it is greatly subsided, and even on the point of vanishing

away. We had here Trances, Visions and Revelations, both 'mong Blacks and Whites, in abundance. . . .”*

Charleston haughtily ignored Whitefield's motto but agreed with Benjamin Franklin that the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution of the United States had given birth to a republic, “If you can keep it.” Charleston did not miss the note of warning in Franklin's “If” and determined not to let the Union sink into a democracy which would mean the rule of the “common man.” Such was her pretentious ambition. In 1859 when Darwin theorized upon the “Origin of the Species” Charleston was proud and flattered because he invited one of her own, Mr. W. C. Wells, to prepare a preface for his work, explaining, “Charleston was the first to recognize the theory of natural selection.”

So the City of Gentlemen has much to be forgiven, even when she classed as ignorant (and therefore not to be allowed to govern) poor whites, free Negroes, slaves, and Roman Catholics. When John England arrived constitutional restraints had been legally removed from Catholics, although public opinion continued their social and political enforcement.

It was into such polite yet hostile atmosphere that the Irishman came, landing in Charleston, Saturday, December 30, 1820, after a winter sea voyage of sixty-eight days. As bishop he came by direction of Pope Pius VII; as missionary to “preach the Gospel to every creature” he came by direction of Jesus Christ. Most of the Protestants of Charleston believed, as did John England, that Christ was the very Son of God.

One might lightly say that Bishop England had a warmer “reception” when he died than when he arrived in Charleston. Then the *Courier* gave his advent perfunctory, courteous attention. City dignitaries and social leaders called and received

* From Mrs. St. Julien Ravenel, *Charleston, the Place and the People*, pp. 112-113. By permission of The Macmillan Co., publishers.

his calls in return, but all was covered with a polite restraint; in the beginning Charleston was reserved and cautious.

If ever an apostle went forth upon his mission with a tongue of fire above his head, so came John England to Charleston. The Holy Spirit was his Companion and Counselor. He came to Charleston by God's design, because God had a message for Charleston, and by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit God gave His messenger the power to deliver His word most magnetically.

Charlestonians met a man well knit, of medium stature, with regular, strong, manly features. He remained, as he arrived, beardless in a city of beards, conforming no further than permitting long sideburns, dark or more likely auburn, as his hair, which was plentiful once the broad sweep of his high forehead gave way to it. Whatever the color of his hair, in less than twenty years it was absolutely white.

Charlestonians often heard his well-modulated voice, always tinged with his native accent; and Charlestonians to whom manly chins were an obscurity, always saw his, firm and powerful. They could not miss the sincerity and friendliness of his penetrating, deep-set eyes, which fairly blazed when the Holy Spirit gave him the words to speak the message which He had sent him to utter. They could not fail to recognize in the Bishop of Charleston a man of their own cherished standards, one of intelligence, refinement, and hospitality.

And what was John England's estimation of the Charlestonians?

"I love your countrymen more as I know them better," he wrote one day from the table in his study in the house on Hasell Street to William Gaston of New Bern, North Carolina. "They are well-disposed, religiously inclined people," he enlarged.

A century before a Church of England divine had described Charlestonians as "the vilest race of men upon the earth."

The Bishop's letter continued: "There is but one true Church, but how can they believe without evidence? They have never received it."

Glancing up his eyes met those of his sister, Johanna Monica.

"Americans are not obstinate heretics," he told her smilingly. "They are inquiring, thinking, reasoning. . . ."

He paused.

Then, with a sparkle in his clear eyes, he concluded, "I can truthfully say they are a pious people. Mark my words, Johanna Monica, God will bless them and bring them to the truth."

By his cheerfulness Charlestonians came to know John England as a holy man: human, too, capable of making mistakes and of admitting them. They soon found he was a bold, uncompromising prelate and patriot; his inherent virtue, piety, and talents commanded their respect. It was well, for John England would permit no man to despise him.

He was born at Cork, 1786, and there ordained when twenty-two, obtaining a dispensation from Pius VII for the reception of Holy Orders at that age. Originally he had read law, but after two years he abandoned this, in 1802, for the priesthood. The change brought great joy to his mother. He was her first son. From his birth she had offered him to God. But the period with the law books was not without profit. In Charleston his familiarity with wise legal principles was beneficial in the constitutional organization of his diocese, often in his encounters with animus, and developed his use of subtle logic.

Lacking forty-eight hours of his thirty-fourth birthday, Father England was the first alumnus of Carlow College to be consecrated bishop. The consecrating prelate, Francis Moylan

of Cork, had some knowledge of the American scene through his brother, General Stephen Moylan, aide-de-camp of George Washington, and by Act of Congress, June, 1776, commissary general of the continental army. Did Bishop Francis Moylan of Cork instill into the heart of the newly consecrated bishop of Charleston an enthusiasm for the young republic? Whether or no, it is a fact that England declined to take the oath of allegiance to the British government, insisting he would become an American citizen as soon as possible.

For reasons too obvious to relate John England's education began in a Protestant school, where, as the "only little Papist" for six years his sensibilities were rubbed raw by the ridicule of master and students. At the close of each day his mother tried to apply the balm of love and religious surety to the wounds so harshly inflicted. After six years of taunts and six years of his mother's devoted antidotes John England emerged from this trial firm in faith and tolerant of those who, through the lies and political maneuvers of others, had been denied the blessings, security, and happiness of the true faith. In God's design this experience was essential to his apostolate in America.

Prior to his ordination and during his second year in the seminary, he organized catechism classes for children and adults and was given the task of imparting religious instruction to the Cork militia. He led in organizing material relief for women who had slipped from the path of virtue and in the opening of a coeducational school for the children of the poor. More than this, still prior to his ordination, he was appointed president of the seminary at Cork.

After ordination he established a monthly magazine, *The Religious Repertory*, to counteract some of the pernicious literature of the time. Ever a student and an inveterate reader, he founded a library in a large parish in Cork.

Three years prior to his consecration for the diocese of Charleston, Father England was appointed parish priest of Bandon; a natural, routine appointment, one might say, not worthy of mention here. But over the gate admitting to the city of Bandon was the inscription: "Turk, Jew, or Atheist may enter here, but not a Papist." Father England entered, remained, and left behind in Bandon a reputation of conciliation between sects and parties. Here he evidenced his great sympathy for those who had been cheated of the truth. The unspoken barriers of the City of Gentlemen held no qualms for him: rather, in Charleston as in Bandon, he had only to rely upon the magnetic appeal to reason to dissolve the barriers.

It has been testified of him prior to his departure from his native country, that next to Daniel O'Connell's ". . . his influence was the greatest in the agitation which culminated in Catholic Emancipation." This influence was developed largely through the columns of the Cork *Mercantile Chronicle* of which he was a trustee and chief. O'Connell's own estimate is all inclusive: "If I had John England at my back, I would not fear the entire world before me."

The question warmly disputed in the *Mercantile Chronicle*, a leading Irish newspaper of the day, was the veto controversy, "which arose about the question whether or not the British Government should be allowed the right of interference in the filling of vacant Catholic Sees, or in the appointment of bishops." As an editor John England was an uncompromising defender of Irish rights and Irish justice. A Charleston parallel was his *United States Catholic Miscellaney* wherein he succeeded, more than any prelate or layman of the period, in obtaining ultimate emancipation for American Catholics, who, though legally free, were then in reality no more so than is the American Negro eighty-three years after Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation.

In the City of Gentlemen John England was accorded social recognition, not only as a Christian clergyman and scholar, but as a gentleman. In fact, one writer of the period, describing the social functions attendant upon Lafayette's visit to the city in 1825, records as "one new feature" the "presence of the first Roman Catholic Bishop of Charleston."

This was not the only local or national event which John England shared with Charlestonians. He shared with them the shock of the two deaths on July 4, 1826, of Thomas Jefferson and John Adams. He probably did not share the reigning literary enthusiasm of 1825 which was the work of Sir Walter Scott. Such observations aside, however, no reception, no function for Lafayette could be complete without his presence; and as Charleston heaped laurels upon the old general it also saw him kneel before the Blessed Sacrament in St. Finbar's and receive from the fingers of John England the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ. The Marquis de Lafayette was a Roman Catholic — so, too, by conversion was General Beauregard, Charleston's great defender in 1860.

John England lived through the devastating fire of 1835 in Charleston, a city with almost as many fires as gentlemen to her credit — that is, proportionately! Undoubtedly he was asked to contribute to the Ladies Benevolent Society, founded in 1813, and which survived as an agency of public welfare for forty-seven years. No doubt his sister, Johanna Monica England, was one of its members. He was a Charlestonian when the school of medicine was begun by the Medical Society in 1822. When he arrived in 1820 St. Paul's Episcopal Church had been standing for four years, the largest and for a time the most fashionable church in the city. Building was flourishing when John England came to Charleston, for the city was at last coming forth from the depths of want and depression suffered for the three years of the War of 1812.

Only a year previous to his coming President Monroe visited Charleston accompanied by his Secretary of State, Carolina's own John C. Calhoun.

Samuel B. Morse, inventor of the telegraph, was a Charleston neighbor. In 1827 he was known locally only as a passably good artist. But in his house on Chalmers Street he was perfecting his invention. Years later, from a northern state, he published a baggage of lies against the Catholic Church which his former neighbor, the Bishop of Charleston, answered in his usual vigorous manner.

Bishop England rejoiced with Charlestonians in 1827 when a charter was granted for a railroad to connect the city with Augusta, Georgia. This would carry him in comfort to his mission there. Three years later it was a reality, carrying twenty-five passengers per car and the United States mail at the whizzing rate of twelve miles an hour over a hundred mile run. In 1820 there were regular stages to Boston reaching there in eleven days and nights from Charleston. Thirteen years later a steam packet ran on schedule between Charleston and New York. If so much time at sea appalled the traveler he could take the steamboat from Charleston to Wilmington, North Carolina, thence through Carolina and Virginia by connecting snatches of rail and stage. At Norfolk he would take a bay boat to Baltimore, a haven of refreshment and good food after the unspeakably bad food along the land route.

It was primarily as a spectator that John England lived through with his neighbors the nullification animosities of 1832-1833 which divided households and families. Two South Carolinians exchanged warm words in this dispute over the right of a state within the Union to nullify an act of Congress which her own courts held unconstitutional. These were gentlemen known to John England, one, Andrew Jackson, President of the United States, and the other his good friend Robert Y.

Hayne, then governor of South Carolina. Colonel Hayne in Congress in 1824 had declared: "South Carolina has a character to sustain, and her own dignity requires that no intemperate expression, no threat of forcible resistance to the national government should ever be resorted to. Let us not contemplate or speak of such an event otherwise than in terms of unmingled horror."*

This declaration had been prompted by another event which John England lived through. The Abolition party was an immense irritation, and in 1822 it nearly succeeded in arousing a servile insurrection in Charleston. Intendent at the time was another warm friend of the Bishop of Charleston, Colonel James Hamilton, who was warned of the revolt by two house servants. The chosen date was June 12, 1822, the leader a free mulatto, Denmark Vesey. Of the guilty conspirators, thirty-five were executed. Many were released as too ignorant to understand the evil which the Abolition party had inspired. Bishop England, though a champion of the rights of man, never gave any sympathy to the zealous agitators of Abolitionist hue.

The Roman Catholic Bishop was an active member of the Philosophical and Literary Association of South Carolina formed in the 1820's at the behest of Judge Prioleau. Leading planters, doctors, lawyers, clergymen, and merchants so associated themselves. Meetings were held every two weeks from October to May at the homes of the members, the host always preparing a paper of his own choice providing only that it avoid the two most important topics of men's lives, religion and politics. Following a discussion of the paper, supper was served promptly at eleven. It was for this group that John England prepared his essay on classical education. He was

* From Mrs. St. Julien Ravenel, *Charleston, the Place and the People*, p. 440. By permission of the Macmillan Co., publishers.

honored and admired for his keen interest in scientific and literary works.

On the occasions when he was host to this group undoubtedly his sister graciously presided over the supper, and for all its enforced modesty her hospitality could have been no less cordial than that extended in the wealthy homes of the city where were retained enough house servants to insure that each would accomplish a full half day's work, six hours, in every twenty-four.

The Bishop had told his flock that "comparatively little will suffice for food and raiment." At his death it was said of him, ". . . privations now scarcely credible, were cheerfully undergone, in order that he might the better effect the grand object of his mission to the new world." Four times in twenty-two years he had to forsake a city of immense wealth, crossing the Atlantic to beg funds for his impoverished diocese. His personal poverty remains a high light in modern accounts of his American apostolate. So, on the occasions when he took his turn as host of the Philosophical and Literary Association, the appointments of his home and table could not possibly have "kept up with the Joneses."

In their homes, the homes of the wealthy where there was displayed such costly lavishness, the heart in him could not have been human if it did not groan, not with envy, but with a bitter, revealing realization of what the equivalent of such luxury would mean to his mission. For in such homes, for example, the suppers included boned turkeys, "cooter stew" (terrapin); the desserts were most likely doves of blancmange nested on candied orange peels, or an extensively tiered and heavily iced cake. The meat course was probably served on plates commemorating the surrender of Cornwallis, and as the sugar bowl was passed Washington leisurely crossed the Delaware. The old world Madeira, served before the elaborate

supper, was poured from a crystal decanter shot with thirteen finely etched arrows.

On public occasions to which convention dictated he should lend his presence the display of luxury must have been appalling to John England — for the price of one ladies' gown he could have built a mission church. At the ball given in honor of Lafayette which was attended by eighteen hundred persons in the theater at the corner of Broad and New Streets, all the ladies were gowned in white over which was draped netting of steel, gold, or silver. They topped these with rich and heavy headdresses encrusted with diamonds and other precious stones. Each costume was reputed to have cost its wearer from two to three thousand dollars. But John England had to cross an ocean for a sum like this.

In 1826, General Thomas Pickney was president general of the Societies of the Cincinnati, an organization of Revolutionary officers, begun in 1783. This society, which provided for membership to descend to eldest sons, was named in honor of the Roman, Lucius Quintus Cincinnatus, a "patron saint" unknown to Catholic altars and hence a dark enigma to French officer members. When Alexander Hamilton was killed in 1804 an antidueling sentiment originated in this group. Yet public opinion regarded the duel as the only protection of personal honor, no defense for such being obtainable by law. In 1826, while Major Garden was head of the state society, John England, being solicited by Charlestonians, appealed strongly to the idealistic propensities of Carolinians and so made a major and acknowledged contribution to the abolition of this un-Christian and ungentlemanly practice.

To the Washington Light Infantry Company of Charleston — a part of Lafayette's escort which on that occasion received their orders in French — John England was "chaplain, friend and counselor" for twenty years, and to this group on Febru-

ary 22, 1838, in the Cathedral of St. Finbar's, he delivered a eulogy of George Washington which has not been surpassed to this time.

A magnetic personality, an inspired tongue, a conviction of the truth of his message, are ever desirable attributes — one might almost say prime essentials — in the non-Catholic pulpit, for the less of Christian doctrine the more of personality is needed to "hold" the congregation. In the person of John England Charleston acquired personality, truth, and a natural orator.

His pulpit personality was irresistible, his delivery clear and powerful characterized by the most appropriate and commanding gestures. His message carried the magnetism of the original in an age when the alteration of that original was the pulpit preoccupation of those who protested it. When given a candid hearing Bishop England could arouse the most stoic to enthusiasm. He spoke from his fertile mind, ever aided by the Holy Spirit, never referring to note or manuscript, for neither was ever prepared before the delivery of a sermon. Any published sermons now extant were written after their delivery, not before. And he never used words for mere rhetorical effect. He was a master of the oratorical pause. At such times he frequently scanned the faces before him intently to ascertain if the force of his logic, the luminosity of his demonstration was reaching its mark.

Approaching through courtesy or curiosity at first, Charlestonians returned again and again to hear him. Cowed for years by the scandal of "family" schism, the intemperance of one of the clergy, plus the consequent disapprobation of their neighbors, Charleston Catholics could now lift their heads with pride. They had John England at their back. Unfortunately, unlike Daniel O'Connell, they still feared the world before them. Yet their Bishop's "pulpit personality" excelled

all others in the city: it became "the thing" for class conscious Charlestonians to be seen in the cathedral congregation when Bishop England was scheduled to speak.

This he did with a burning energy which would have exhausted a less inspired missionary. He spoke always with power and facility of expression, with elevation of intellect, sound sense, solidity of judgment, and clear perception, discoursing frequently upon principles common to all men of good faith; always appealing to reason. Without fear, without hedging, without appeasement this Roman Catholic prelate over and over marshaled his evidence toward inevitable singular conclusions deduced by reason and logic. Absorbed, possessed, and inspired by his subject, his eloquent delivery having the fire and zeal of the true apostle, he absorbed, possessed, and inspired his listeners in turn. Never before his coming had American Catholics had such a spokesman, nor have they today.

A showman? Perhaps some of careless speech might say so. Those fortunate enough to have heard him, testify to his charm, his unparalleled charity, for not once in twenty-odd years of preaching from Florida to Massachusetts, from the Atlantic to the Mississippi was ever heard or reported a word or phrase offensive to the thousands of non-Catholics who invariably mingled in or formed the greater portion of the large assemblies gathered to hear him. Always his message instructed, never abused; always he explained, never quarreled.

John England really loved the human soul. He came to bring that soul the vital message first delivered by its Creator. He loved the gentlemen of Charleston and spoke to them accordingly. He loved the poor of Charleston and spoke to them accordingly. He loved the Negroes of Charleston and spoke to them accordingly. More, he loved that majority of all classes who, by family affection, by religious prejudice, and by propa-

gandist history had been denied the spiritual security, the consolation, and the joy of the Catholic faith.

It was because of John England's Catholicism that he was a great figure. Stripped of this magnetism he would be as forgotten today as are those ministers of other religions who were his Charleston neighbors. Their names are not recalled now, a century after they lived, except in so far as they brushed John England's faith.

And yet for all the power of his eloquence, for all the soundness of his reason, for all the charity of his soul, he could not, in twenty years, wholly wipe out that hatred for his faith which had been generated for three hundred years by the dynamo of deliberate propaganda. No man in America despised John England; thousands despised his religion.

Why?

The answers always arrive under the general headings of bigotry, prejudice, and history. What, specifically, lies behind these generalizations? A short diversion to rediscover the answer to this question will not be useless, but rather contributory to a better understanding on all sides.

The Bishop, himself, has left us two searchingly analytical dissertations in this regard, which here are fitting introductions to the "history" in the following chapter. These statements are found in a letter dated at Charleston, September 4, 1826, which he addressed to the Roman Catholics of the United States of America:

At the period of the Revolution, the Catholic was by British policy, by British contrivance, by British example, and by British law degraded in every colony and persecuted in all but one [Pennsylvania]. The feelings of nations do not suddenly or very quickly subside, much less become altogether different. Only half a century has passed away since this was the case. It could hardly be expected that all this feeling could be forgotten by this time.

Men will always be prone to say that there must have been some good

cause for legal oppressions. It is but reasonable, some philosophers say, to suppose the Catholic gave cause, or if he did not, the Protestant thought he did, which is equally sufficient.

Now, you and I probably believe that no cause was given; but let us concede that there was, and leave to those who made and executed the penal laws to settle their account with a just and merciful God. I think we may fairly state this as one cause of the present dis-esteem in which, I believe, we are held by many of our fellow-citizens. It operates silently, imperceptibly, but efficaciously. It resolves itself into this soliloquy — “My ancestors were obliged by circumstances to oppress Catholics; my ancestors were good; they could not have been guilty of cruelty or of injustice; I have heard them say there was good cause, because, formerly Catholics were more dangerous than are those of the present day. We have relieved them. I am glad of it. If their predecessors had been as good as those now, the harsh laws would not have been necessary; but still there is something not right about their system.”

Rather than italicize this quotation it is interrupted here for emphatic pause. How many of us, recalling our good ancestors, can, with but brief reflection, realize that indeed “silently, imperceptibly but efficaciously” they instilled in us the sentiments expressed in the above soliloquy? How many persons brought up free to “choose their own religion” have, in “shopping around” from one church to another never entered a Catholic church nor investigated Catholic claims? Why? Why, simply because “our people” wouldn’t do such a thing!

John England continues, pointing up a major obstacle to the acceptance of Catholic truth even now:

Thus that strongest bias to which the human mind is liable — that bias arising from affection for one’s kindred and from respect for the cherished memory of one’s immediate ancestors, creates in good and amiable minds a powerful, though unsuspected prejudice against us. There are no minds over which this prejudice has a more extensive and better established dominion than those of generous and amiable women, for the very excellence of their dispositions leads them to cherish warmly those family attachments from which it springs. . . . Yet those ladies have the very best dispositions and the kindest hearts; they are humane, generous and affectionate; but their family affections necessarily hold first place, and they cannot believe that their fathers, and their uncles, and their

progenitors, in whom they have found so many good qualities, could be persecutors of innocent people; there must, they think, have been something bad, and something of sufficient criminality in the Catholic of that day to have provoked this oppression. . . . This has enabled me often to excuse what I lamented and solve what would be otherwise insoluble.

So much for family loyalties. There is another source of prejudice, too, which strikes a note of veracity today as it did when John England defined it. This

. . . arises from religious feeling. Every mind, not actually infidel, views with more or less reverence the edifice for public worship, and generally the mind is prepared to receive with scarcely a suspicion of falsehood every statement made in this sacred place by the man who is believed to bear the divine commission to announce saving truths to the world. In a land where the law prevented the existence of a Catholic, the public teacher of religion, educated upon the assumption that the Catholic religion was grossly erroneous, might safely indulge in what statements he thought proper; and naturally he would be expected occasionally to inveigh against those tenets, to destroy whose prevalence was the object of his ministry; and to his declaration there would be no reply. . . . Religious prejudice is, perhaps, stronger than family affection; either is ever powerful; but what must be that prejudice which is a combination and a sublimation of both?

What indeed? But the American people are still "inquiring, thinking, reasoning," for over one hundred thousand a year now seek admission to that One, Holy, Roman, Catholic, and Apostolic Church once so feared and despised.

.. 3 ..

I had my prejudices against the English nation, because of the wrongs inflicted upon my country and my religion, by the English government. But my residence in this country has removed that prejudice; . . . I take a wide distinction between [the English people] and their government. The governors of England were criminal, the people comparatively free from blame. The English people were deceived. They were misled by the pulpit, by the press, by the theatre, by the legislature, by the writer of history, and by the writer of romance. . . .

The people of England abhor and detest . . . the atrocious original of what is exhibited to them as the Roman Catholic religion. . . . The painting is a gross delusion. . . . You may exhibit the original if you will: a question will naturally arise in the mind of the spectator, whether, as there must be deceit somewhere, it is not more natural to charge it upon you than upon his early instructor. His pride will naturally turn to the aid of his early impression . . . the human mind is tenacious of its early impressions.

* * * *

However we may deplore the sad mistakes of a people thus systematically misinformed and excited, we must abstain from their condemnation.

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No wonder that strange notions of our religion should be entertained. . . .

PRIOR to the American Revolution there were practically no Catholics of record in the Carolinas and Georgia, although

Bishop England, himself, relates that in 1775 two Irish Catholics were found in Charleston who, it was alleged, conspired with some Negroes against the liberties of the country. These were tarred, feathered, and banished.

There are historic exceptions to this general statement. The Spaniards established many missions among the coastal islands of Georgia in 1566 which were destroyed the following year. From 1616 to 1660 Spanish Franciscans visited these islands. Within these forty-odd years four priests were martyred. The Georgia charter, granted in 1732, followed the usual pattern providing a restricted religious freedom, "Papists" being excepted.

Yet in 1750 when a society was formed for the care of orphans one of the founders, a tavern keeper, was Peter Tondee, a Catholic. It was under his roof that the Sons of Liberty first met in 1774, and the following year, on July 4, the First Provincial Congress also met in Peter's tavern. Another Catholic, Cornelius McCarthy, was given a grant of land in Georgia, December 4, 1764. This evidence might be lost to the record except for the fact that English soldiers stationed in the Loyalist stronghold, which was Georgia, arrested McCarthy for publicly advocating independence. Incidental is the death of six hundred French Catholic soldiers and of Count Pulaski in the siege of Savannah in 1779.

As is true of South Carolina, the first group of Catholics in Georgia were refugees from San Domingo.

From the outset, testimony of isolated clergymen to the contrary, South Carolinians had a higher regard for religion than their fellow colonists to the north. As Fiske has stated, Charleston boasted a "type of society in some respects more essentially aristocratic than in Virginia." This society established the Church of England: North Carolina was largely settled by nonconformists, while Georgia openly

offered refuge to all Protestants. All three colonies, having English charters, naturally excluded Roman Catholics.

But long before 1629 when Carolina was granted to Sir Robert Heath, Catholics had trod the soil: it cannot be proved that the first religious service in Carolina was not the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass. It was an attempted settlement at Port Royal, surprised and destroyed in 1568 by de Gourgues, which gave the whole region its name in honor of Charles IX of France. Further, in the South Carolina Assembly which met in 1716 the presence of Catholics in the southern portion of the colony was fearfully exposed. The Yemassee Indians, unfriendly and given to massacre, were not feared as much as Irish Catholics — though Sullivan's Island was named for one Captain Florence O'Sullivan — who were described as "persons of lewd and profligate lives."

North Carolina, a colony of nonconformity with some barrens of rigid Puritanism, had a more Catholic background prior to the Revolution than either South Carolina or Georgia. In 1524 the famed Catholic explorer Verrazano, who named Long Island the Isle of the Apostles, and New York Bay St. Mary's Bay, sent a searching party up the Cape Fear River while others examined the Cape itself. Two Catholic recusants well known to Queen Elizabeth, Sir Thomas Gerard, ancestor of the one by the same name who was prominent in the Maryland settlement, and Sir George Peckham, were partners with Sir Walter Raleigh in his expedition of 1584.

To Sir Walter goes the honor of planting the first English colony in America, and to North Carolina's Roanoke Island, the honor of being the site of that colony subsequently known as "Lost." Here was the first attempt with the indulgent connivance of the Crown to develop a refuge for persecuted Catholics in the New World. Here, too, on North Carolina soil, was born, in 1587, Virginia Dare although at the time

these events transpired the land was mapped as Virginia. It was in the Lost Colony that the first baptism of an English child was performed: it is a presumption of historians that the members of this colony were Catholics, permitted to leave the realm through the intercession of Raleigh's recusant partners.

In 1605 there came another expedition to Carolina. One of the backers was known as a staunch Catholic, Lord Arundell of Wardour. Never did the Arundells of Wardour forsake their faith. Sir Thomas, of this venture, was later father-in-law of Cecilius Calvert, second Lord Baltimore, who planted the only forthright Catholic colony in America at St. Maries in Maryland: a colony which lost its distinction and true religious freedom when he gave refuge to harassed Puritans from Virginia where the "establishment" made their lives miserable. Another backer of the 1605 venture was the Earl of Southampton, Henry Wriothesley, the second to bear the title in this Catholic family.

Carolina was not formally distinguished North and South until 1729; but the terms were popularly used from 1690. North Carolina had many Irish and Scotch settlers of Catholic names who planted Fayetteville, Wilmington, and the general Cape Fear area. South Carolina attempted to withhold the franchise from all who were not members of the Church of England, but the nonconformist atmosphere of North Carolina created indifference on this point.

By the end of the seventeenth century Carolina's chief communities were Albemarle, 1644, on the Virginia border; Clarendon, 1663, on the Cape Fear River; and 1670, the Ashley River colony from which grew Charleston.

In North Carolina, Charleston's social and cultural counterpart was New Bern. Here the governor resided: a Roman Catholic, Dr. Thomas Burke, having that distinction in 1781;

and here in New Bern there was no rigid Puritanism so alien to the development of the gracious southern character. Dr. Burke came to Carolina from Galway, Ireland, and is buried in Hillsboro in an unmarked grave on land formerly his. North Carolina so admired this Catholic that she has named a county for him, an honor given another resident of New Bern, too, the Catholic, William Gaston. Both of these gentlemen, as Catholics, were subject to the strictures of the anti-Catholic clause in North Carolina's constitution drawn in 1776 and which remained there until removed in 1835 through the efforts of Judge Gaston.

But despite this historical evidence it was not until the Bill of Rights was appended to the Constitution of the United States that Catholics in appreciable numbers had the courage to migrate to the Carolinas and Georgia; and even then many found it commercially and socially expedient to keep their religious loyalties hidden from friend and neighbor. As a consequence Bishop England had the not infrequent experience of identifying to each other as Catholics, persons who had been next-door neighbors for a generation or more. To avoid censure such persons had long attended Protestant services, and it is but natural, lacking a ministry of their own, that many were lost to the Faith. In 1832 John England estimated these as "four times as numerous as the actual number of those who belong to the Church." Long before the coming of John England, South Carolina and Georgia had stricken from their constitutions the anti-Catholic clauses, but not so the Old North State.

Instinctively comes the question, "Why?"

The reasons were twofold, not only for the stubborn resistance of the Old North State but for public opinion throughout the diocese of Charleston. The reasons rest partly with Catholics themselves, clergy and laity, and for the other part upon the intellectual fare of centuries upon which people depended for

their information. One Charleston chronicler has stated that Carolinians were always a "bookish people." Charleston's first library, opened in 1708, was located in the rectory of St. Philip's Episcopal Church. Dr. Bray, the rector and "commissary of the Bishop of London," was the librarian. In 1736 the town itself opened a public library which soon took care to lend books only to persons who would not abuse them. The Charleston Library familiar to John England, and with which he supplemented his own now lost to the diocese since the fire of 1861, was housed on the third floor of the courthouse until it moved in 1835 to the South Carolina Bank Building.

Books were willed by titles, every plantation and town house having its own library. Many of the books were religious works; in a report of 1808 of the Public Library such works appeared to be more in demand than any others. Among the authors appearing in the old wills were Plutarch, Locke, Addison, Pope, and Virgil. There were many works in French, and a bookshop in Charleston from the earliest times was always a profitable enterprise. During the pre-Revolutionary era books were constantly imported, most of them coming from Great Britain.

Highly popular at this period, too, were historical works, particularly those edited and printed in England and sent forth to her colonials with a mother's blessing and implied admonition to read and be guided accordingly. After the Revolution anti-English sentiment ran high in Charleston — socially, but not culturally, for the old history books were still read and believed. So, even after the "divorce" Carolina was still an obedient child of the mother country in this regard. So, too, were the French Protestants. These followed the cultural patterns and religious faith of those who gave them cordial refuge after Louis XIV revoked the Edict of Nantes in 1685.

This intellectual "conditioning" naturally arouses our curiosity as to the material supplied for its accomplishment, and the nationals subjected to it.

Following the English and French migrations to the diocese of Charleston large numbers of so-called Scotch-Irish came to America from northern Ireland, where, trusting the glowing promises and accepting the generous concessions of land confiscated from Irish Catholics, James I of England and VI of Scotland had persuaded his countrymen to settle and plant Presbyterianism. But James was lax in the fulfillment of his promises, and when hard pressed financially bore down upon his loyal Scots in Ireland to fill his royal coffers. Disillusioned, many moved again across the water to America.

New England did not want them. New York did not want them. Pennsylvania did not want them. She offered the Scotch western land at bargain prices claiming the area of her seaboard was uncomfortably congested. Into the "bargain" she calculated these people would create a buffer between Philadelphia and adjacent communities and the Indians to the west. It was in the same scheming spirit that the Carolinas welcomed Oglethorpe's development of Georgia in 1733. This Protestant refuge would be a barrier between them and the Spaniards at St. Augustine.

The westward trek of the Scotch-Irish paused, however, at the natural barrier of the Appalachian and Blue Ridge Mountains. Unwelcome to the north and to the east, facing high mountains to the west, the only alternative was to turn south. So some came at last to settle in the Blue Ridge and Great Smokies of western North Carolina, only a few turning east again after crossing the Virginia line to plant a colony in the northeastern part of the state.

Such was the dispersal of nationalities and religions when Bishop England assumed his charge in Charleston. But it was

only on the seaboard and toward the central interior that he found the people ardent devotees of historical works; to the west among the Scotch-Irish, prejudice was so inborn it thrived without literary stimulus, and to this section imports of any kind seldom arrived. Thus these people became social and intellectual isolationists by circumstance, not by choice.

But if these were isolationists through no fault of their own, Bishop England found their neighbors in the Piedmont and along the coast no less so for they reflected in thought and speech the insular isolation of England, herself. Although these persons all cherished their "freedom" in truth they did not enjoy such. The surprise of it is that most of them seemed unaware of their deprivation.

Historically their reading fare imitated and often surpassed the type of propaganda inspired by the fallen-away Catholic priest, Martin Luther, who in 1536 declared, ". . . all who have the spirit of Christ know well that they can bring no higher or more acceptable praise offering to God than all they can say or write against this blood-thirsty, unclean, blasphemic whore of the devil," namely the Roman Catholic Church which he had betrayed as a Judas.

Thirteen years after the death of Luther who first conceived that Catholicism might be destroyed by the *weapon of history*, "some learned and pious men," called the Centuriators of Magdeburg, published at Bâle the first three folio volumes of thirteen, entitled *The History of the Christian Church*. This group, dividing their work into centuries, whence their self-chosen title, was directed by the most learned Lutheran theologian of his day, Falcius Illyricus (Matthias Vlacich Francovich) who, but for an early influence, might probably have become a Franciscan. But an uncle, another fallen-away Catholic who had been a friar, instilled in his nephew a fanatical hatred for the ancient faith.

The History of the Christian Church, whose fourth folio volume appearing in 1560 was dedicated to Elizabeth of England, was not produced without benefit of research. But the major proposition of this work was that from the death of the last of the Apostles until the "restoration of the true religion" by Martin Luther, the ancient Church had gone astray under the guidance of a succession of Roman anti-christs who were styled popes. The compilers took pains to present facts in a way to support this premise.

They also added some frills of fiction such as the legend of the female pope; the legend of the discovery of six thousand infant skulls in a convent fishpond. These and kindred sensational legends still enjoy verbal publication in the area of John England's diocese.

Of course the Centuriators found ample authentic material for scandal in the lives of many of the Renaissance popes; some Catholics of every description in every generation have furnished such material. It was not difficult to justify the argument that such immoral persons had led the Church astray: indeed it would seem wholly logical except for the fact that her Founder promised that the "gates of hell shall not prevail against it." The Centuriators never gave the popes whom they criticized credit for being human beings like themselves: it was by their implication that there also arose the legend that Catholics worship the pope as God. Although using authentic reference material, these "learned and pious men" did not scruple to falsify, distort, even mutilate and forge references to support their objective. Further editions of their work were published under the editorship of men of varying religious sympathies in 1624 and again from 1757 to 1765.

One Cesare Baronius who received the red hat in 1596, while yet a young man, was directed by St. Philip Neri to

refute the historical calumny of the Centuriators of Magdeburg. His work was wholly constructive, carrying no reference to or identification of his adversaries, no point-by-point refutations. His *Annales Ecclesiastici* in twelve folio volumes were published in Rome from 1588 to 1607. Baronius removed history from the field of polemics. His was the first large work of astute historical penetration supported by source verification. The *Annales* completely overshadowed the Centuriators: but England put this work on *her index of forbidden books*. The *Annales* were contraband in both the mother country and her colonies; Catholics, therefore, were early deprived of a hearing. Even in our generation the historical melody from Bâle is, in many quarters, more sung than the composition from Rome, and in America with less reason than heretofore for in this country intellectual freedom now prevails. The difficulty is, one has to dig for it: to be guided by public commentators is not to enjoy intellectual freedom.

The theme and tempo of British historians and littérateurs for almost two hundred and fifty years was set by the Centuriators. It was the traditions and legends planted by them which Edward Gibbon crystallized as "facts" in his *Decline and Fall*. It was from them that Sir Walter Scott, so popular in Charleston during John England's time, gathered his fancies exhibited in *Tales of a Grandfather* which was published in 1828 for the children of England, Scotland, and northern Ireland. In passing it might be mentioned that Edward Gibbon became a Catholic at the age of 18 and was immediately expelled from Oxford. He was sent to the Continent, to the household of a Lutheran minister, and here acquired the frame of mind necessary to the production of his famous fabrications.

So effective had been the work of the Centuriators by 1755 that Charlotte Brönté was applauded when she held as de-

praved, if not insane, anyone who would embrace the old religion. Another Englishman, Henry Bolingbroke, insisted that history began with the sixteenth century, that to retreat further into the past was intellectual snobbery, "a ridiculous affectation." Bolingbroke was but one of the legion of second-hand sources used by Gibbon.

There also circulated in England, Scotland, northern Ireland, and so in Colonial America a church textbook published in 1741 by Johann Lorenz Mosheim, a theological professor who became chancellor of the University of Göttingen in 1747. It was titled the *Institutiones Historiae Ecclesiasticae* and was the first work to diverge from the method of the Centuriators of Magdeburg. In contrast, Mosheim's work — which John England quoted in the Fuller controversy of 1839 — was so conservative as to be extremely dull reading and so did not enjoy the popularity of its predecessor. But Mosheim did cling to the theme that prior to the sixteenth century all of Europe had been deliberately held in dark ignorance and superstition by the Church of Rome. He had also a marked peculiarity. Although invariably he gave correct page and line reference, he also invariably misquoted the identified source, a fact readily verified by comparison. But no matter, dull and misquoting, the English critics praised him highly, and his work was found in Charleston libraries. Modern scholars, making comparisons and exposing flagrant falsifications, excuse the old historians holding them not guilty of conscious insincerity but preoccupied in proving beyond refutation points necessary to show that the Roman Catholic Church was responsible for all the evils of history and encouraged all the immoralities of human nature. Somehow it never seemed to occur to the majority that there could be some variance between what a Church taught and what her children did.

Modern scholars, pointing out the inherent flaws of the old propaganda, have long since reversed the testimony of history. But Luther, the Centuriators, Falicus Illyricus, Mosheim, Bolingbroke, Gibbon, Sir Walter Scott, Charlotte Brontë, and a legion of others unmentioned, now all dust, have left behind their monuments of calumny which still remain the intellectual beacons for many moderns.

How complete John England found the lack of intellectual independence is demonstrated by him in a pamphlet distributed in Dublin in 1832 where he paused — to beg — on his way to Rome:

The Carolinas were settled as a colony about one hundred and fifty years since, by English emigrants; the penal laws against Catholics were then in full force, and the hatred to their religion was violent in Great Britain; it was considered indeed doing a service to God and to the state to oppress them; to keep this spirit in full vigor, the grossest misrepresentations of our doctrine were sedulously got up and circulated.

The pardon of sins already committed, by absolution obtained for money; leave procured under the name of indulgence, to perpetrate future crimes of the most atrocious description, at an exceedingly moderate charge; the principles that no faith was to be kept with heretics, that kings or princes who were not obsequious minions to the Pope, should be deposed, and ought to be killed, that all persons who were not members of the Catholic Church and consequently slaves to Rome, should be exterminated wherever an opportunity offered; these and a variety of similar exhibitions, as the true features of what was called "popery" were given to the world, as the justification of that barbarous code which then disgraced the British and Irish statute books.

Numbers of simple and well disposed people who had no means of detecting the falsehoods, sincerely believed the truth of statements made solemnly in the halls of legislation, from the pulpit, in the courts of justice, and even introduced into the very liturgy by which they approach to pay homage to their God. . . . As the colony increased in age their notions of the Catholic religion became inveterate: nor was there a corrective — the colony received all its literature from the mother country. . . . America was supplied from the mother country with abundant addition to the original calumnies; every plot, every explosion whether of a mine of gun-powder or of a meal tub, was said to be the villainy of "papists." No wonder that strange notions of our religion should be enter-

tained by a colony thus tutored to the detestation of a calumniated people! . . . This was the result of circumstances over which the colonists had no control.

It could have been no surprise to John England who witnessed the effectiveness of this censored intellectualism that two years after the publication of this pamphlet a convent was burned in Massachusetts. Vermin should be burned out — their extermination is but a natural human reaction. If the Charlestown, Massachusetts, mob sincerely believed all these things, surely it acted in good conscience when it applied the torch to the convent. Neither a patriot, nor one who loved God could be expected to have done less.

As late as 1875 or thereabouts English school books still taught the melody of Bâle. As late as the 1920's, if not beyond, the state schools of France taught the same tunes. Although honest scholars have long since left Edward Gibbon to his decline and fall, even at this writing many public school systems presume that all Protestant countries are enlightened and progressive, while Catholic countries wallow in intellectual darkness. The matrix of modern anti-Catholicism is the same as that which John England exposed in the Carolinas and Georgia in the years from 1820 to 1842.

♦ ♦ 4 ♦ ♦

DECLARATION OF THE ARCHBISHOP OF BALTIMORE FOR THE CATHOLICS OF CHARLESTON, SOUTH CAROLINA

I hereby certify, that on the 21st of February, 1816, I revoked all pastoral powers heretofore granted to the Rev. Mr. F. Gallagher, revocable at will, on account of his scandalous excesses in the use of liquor, and that a few days before, I also revoked all spiritual powers priorly granted to the Rev. Mr. Browne to be exercised within this Diocese for the benefit of his neighbour, but revocable at will, on account of disobediently delaying to carry into effect my orders and injunction on him to return to Augusta and there assume the care of the Catholic Congregation with which he was charged by my Predecessor; and with tampering with the Laity to form an opposition to my orders by frequent complaints and empty pretensions of being grossly injured, and declaring openly his determination not to suffer anyone, Bishop or Pope himself, thus to injure him with impunity, &c.

As therefore the aforesaid Messrs. Gallagher and Browne have presumed to exercise Spiritual Functions, which were forbidden them by revocation of the above mentioned powers, I here declare to all whom it may concern, that ipso facto they incurred the censure published by my predecessor, in his printed faculties, granted to the priests he employed. And furthermore as they persevered under this censure to exercise the same forbidden functions, I here declare that they have incurred the Great and Formidable Censure of Irregularity,

which renders their celebration of Holy Mass, Administration of Sacraments and performance of Pastoral Duty Sacrilegious, and their absolutions perfectly null or of no effect. And all those among you, who attend or are present at their Sacrilegious ministry, will be involved in the same ruinous state with them. If you belong to Christ you will listen to His Church: If you refuse to do so, you will enter on the road of perdition. The Rev. Mr. Clorivière is the only lawful Catholic Pastor in Charleston and its vicinity, whose voice you must acknowledge and follow. Given this 18th day of April (1816), in Baltimore.



Would not the principle of oblivion be the most likely to create harmony?

SO WROTE John England to Father Benedict Fenwick, S.J., on August 29, 1820. Archbishop Ambrose Maréchal had sent Fathers Fenwick and Wallace to Charleston two years previously — Father Wallace going almost at once to Columbia — after prevailing at length and with final success upon the Jesuit superior to spare these two priests for his assistance in a dire calamity. It would be of great relief to this writer to treat the preamble to the erection of the diocese of Charleston with the oblivion John England suggests, but to do so would deprive this account of essential, though wholly unpleasant, background.

This background involves a priest, one Simon Felix Gallagher, who possessed extraordinary talents and a fatal appetite for "ardent spirits"; another, an Augustinian, one Robert Browne, who so loved himself that higher authority was obnoxious and unbearable; still another, one John Egan, stationed at Augusta, who, toward the close of 1819 visited the Protestant Episcopal bishop of Richmond, Virginia, with a woman with whom he went through a form of marriage be-

fore that bishop. Returning to Augusta with his "wife" he actively preached against the Catholic doctrines he had so recently upheld, particularly that relating to the Blessed Sacrament. So violent was his denunciation of this doctrine that his successor, one Samuel Cooper, prayed for and prophesied a miracle to thwart the energies of the apostate. Legend affirms that prayer was answered and prophecy fulfilled, but chroniclers are disposed to give little credence to the legend. Bishop England, himself, writing of this convert priest mentions "the bad effects of Rev. Mr. Cooper's injudicious zeal in Augusta."

It would be gratifying if the troubles in Charleston could be thus briefly stated and at this point relegated to "oblivion," but such treatment would not satisfy the reader seeking information and certainly that not too rare reader who has an avid taste for scandal. Such a reader will not find complete satisfaction here: he can find it with further search.

In his discussion of the history of the diocese of Charleston prior to 1821, Bishop England refers to an "Italian priest" who ministered to the Irish Catholics in 1786. At that time Mass was offered in a house located at a corner of Tradd and Orange Streets. Not until 1801 did Charleston Catholics begin to build a church of their own. In 1789, during the pastorate of one Father Ryan, the congregation purchased ground on Hasell Street upon which there was a small, dilapidated wooden church abandoned by some Methodists. Title to the property was vested in the congregation which, for legal purposes, was represented by an elected board of trustees.

For reasons of health Father Ryan departed and was replaced by a Father Keating who repaired the Methodist ruin as well as could be and then dedicated the first Catholic church of the Carolinas to the Mother of God. It was this parish which with brick and mortar began in 1801 to build

St. Mary's Church, today the oldest Catholic church in Charleston whose vestry has welcomed every bishop of the diocese. But Father Keating, too, because of poor health, had to abandon his flock, and for a few years it remained without a shepherd.

When this lack was supplied in 1793 trouble began for Charleston Catholics. They were afflicted externally and internally; externally by their new pastor, Simon Felix Gallagher, D.D., whose "learning and elocution," Bishop England reports, ". . . drew to this tottering remnant of a wooden church the first rank and talents of the city." The internal trouble developed in the board of trustees.

These dual afflictions were not unique to Charleston. New York and Philadelphia, not forgetting Norfolk, are only a few of the other locales which suffered in like manner.

Trusteemia, as it came to be called, was peculiar to the American Church and arose from early civil regulations regarding the holding of Church property. These laws, in the beginning, took no cognizance of the Canon Law of the Roman Catholic Church. Written by Protestant legislators they complied with Protestant practice which recognized no supreme ecclesiastical authority and permitted the "calling" or rejecting of ministers. Personality replaced the discipline of the Roman Church, and so when a Catholic pastor was personally disliked for whatever reason real or imagined, some trustees and lax laity looked with envy to the Protestant practice of "hiring and firing" at will. Coupled with this jealousy, in the early years of the American Church, was the then vibrant rudiment of democracy itself which permeated the atmosphere of the country as a rare novelty, namely the right to vote, to voice a choice in the selection of civil officers. This cherished civil right was so new, so stimulating, that many American Catholics drank too deeply of the draught of inde-

pendence, confusing, deliberately or otherwise, the things that belonged to Caesar and the things that belonged to God. They, too, yearned to elect their pastors as the Protestants did and fire them as well if they did not please. The result could be nothing less than laxity, defiance, rebellion, and, in some instances, schism. Charleston was one of these tragic instances.

Perhaps the inability of Charleston Catholics to support their pastor, who required \$1,400 per year, may be the first sign of the trouble to come. St. Mary's Congregation, for reasons financial, was forced to share Dr. Gallagher with the College of Charleston where, despite what one would presume to have been the "disability" of his faith, his erudition was welcomed on the faculty and for a time he was principal of the institute. He was a kindly person, as we say, a "good mixer," and through his efforts and genial sociability he attracted sufficient funds to begin the erection of St. Mary's Church.

Meanwhile, being advised of many Catholics in Savannah, Archbishop Carroll sent Father Le Mercier there, three years after Father Gallagher was sent to Charleston. In another three years, 1799, the city of Savannah gave land for the erection of a Catholic church, which in this richly Baptist section was dedicated to St. John the Baptist. Father Le Mercier was not without a whimsical sense of humor.

While pastor at Savannah he also visited the Catholics at Augusta and Locust Grove. The latter were largely refugees from Maryland where Catholic hospitality to persecuted non-conformists from Virginia had resulted in religious freedom for all in Maryland except the Catholics who had first colonized it. The first register entry in Augusta was recorded on the feast of St. James, 1803. Prior to this time Augusta and Locust Grove were, in a sense, missions of Savannah. In a

sense, because none of the pastors, even in Charleston, had parochial status.

Not until 1810 did Locust Grove have a resident priest. Then Archbishop Carroll sent the Augustinian, Robert Browne, to the Catholics living there. Even so, Locust Grove saw little of him. He was later transferred to Augusta, but the bulk of his time during both appointments was spent in Charleston with Father Gallagher.

So much for the sketch of Catholic congregations in South Carolina and Georgia at the beginning of the nineteenth century. In the Old North State, still the least Catholic of the Union, while there were scattered Catholics as mentioned in a previous chapter, there were no congregations and no priests. However, by force of geography, some priests occasionally were transient in North Carolina while traveling over this desert spot of the Baltimore diocese. So, in 1796, for two weeks a priest visited Wilmington where he offered Mass, baptized, absolved, and witnessed marriages; also again for two or three days in 1815 Wilmington was so favored. Mass was offered in Washington, North Carolina, in 1807 and 1808, and again in 1819 and 1820. But these occasions were exceptions.

Charleston, therefore, even at this early time, was the "see" of the Carolinas and Georgia, and there for the space of some years all was well (or overlooked) between Father Gallagher and his people. But on October 18, 1801, Samuel Corbett, a trustee, was impelled to write to Bishop Carroll of the pastor's intemperance which was exposing Catholics to unpleasant censure.

Corbett's letter was not the bishop's first knowledge of the Gallagher weakness; in fact there were times when the archbishop, as was true with many other priests whom he had placed, suspected the veracity of the credentials from Ireland which had been presented to him by Father Gallagher. As

early as January 23, 1799, he had written Father Gallagher: "For two or three years past, accounts from different persons unknown and unconnected with each other, have reached my ears, that you have given offence or scandal often, and give it most habitually by the most unbecoming and undisguised intemperance; that even in the church, at afternoon service, you have been hardly able to hold yourself on your legs; that whilst you are in this state, you sometimes use profane oaths, etc., etc. . . . Divine service is said to be performed in a very indecorous manner, the vestments, linen and everything about the altar carry marks of total inattention to and a disregard of the sacred uses to which they are applied. These are heavy imputations; and it will afford me infinite relief to know that they are unmerited."

Unhappily these "heavy imputations" were merited, and Father Gallagher's explanation or defense is not of record. But to such an extent did his human frailty damage his ministry and the good name of Charleston Catholics that at long last Archbishop Carroll determined a change imperative for the prestige of the Church and the benefit of souls.

"Since your return to Charleston," he wrote Father Gallagher following a visit the latter had paid to Baltimore and Washington during which time his weakness had in no degree abated, "I scarcely ever hear you mentioned by a Catholic or a protestant, especially the latter, who, tho' they give you credit for your uncommon talents, do not add some remarks on that intemperance, which, if it be as habitual as it is represented, must destroy in great measure the effect of your discourses, and other ministerial duties."

He proposed, since Father Gallagher then had recently been made principal of Charleston College and hence not only had a livelihood but also less time to devote to pastoral obligations, that these be removed from him and given to Father

Ryan, now recovered in health and willing to return to Charleston. "Tho' his talents are very limited, yet his conduct is correct," Carroll explained, "and making only an exception for his quickness of temper, he has conciliated esteem, wherever he lived."

It was the archbishop's intention to send Father Ryan to Charleston as pastor, and he assured Father Gallagher he would have taken such a remedial step much sooner except for "the hope with which I flattered myself, that your good sense (to omit higher considerations) would work a change in you, and my reluctance was extreme to deprive the Diocese of the benefits of your talents."

With all the force of his talent in the use of words Dr. Gallagher indignantly resisted his removal, terming it "ecclesiastical suicide." Defying the authority of the metropolitan of Baltimore, he appealed, as was his privilege in proper circumstances, to Rome, for redress. More than this, he advertised his offended pride and violent indignation among his parishioners, winning many personal adherents among them. Flatly refusing to obey the archbishop and relinquish his pastorate to Father Ryan, he gave the Catholics of Charleston sufficient details of Carroll's actions to bring to that prelate a warm complaint from the Charleston trustees. "I am disposed to great and long forbearance rather than to incur the danger of schism in your congregation," the archbishop replied to their letter of November 10, 1801.

Meanwhile, in order to render his appeal more effective and more likely of success, Father Gallagher made several misrepresentations to Rome. These being transparent, the Holy See advised Archbishop Carroll that he had full authority to dispose of the errant pastor as he thought best. But this endorsement of his authority, while it was gratifying — the more so as in the immediate future Rome was not so cautious, to the great embar-

rassment of Baltimore — it in no way eased his exercise of it, for Father Gallagher, supported by trustees and laity, maintained his stubborn resistance to canonical discipline.

Father Ryan did not, therefore, return to Charleston, but in 1803, in the fall of the year, Bishop Carroll having extended his "great and long forbearance" two more years called Father Le Mercier from Savannah to assume the pastorate at Charleston. A promotion into a hornets' nest. Now a French priest was placed over a predominantly Irish congregation.

Following the French Revolution many such found refuge in America but unfamiliarity with the English language was a major disadvantage to the success of their ministry in the pulpit and naturally kept them somewhat apart from their flocks. Most of the Catholics were "out of the old country." So in Archbishop Carroll's time were planted the seeds of racial animosity within the Catholic body which, once death removed his personality and influence from the leadership of the American Church, flared into open and bitter "warfare" in many quarters. It is this sentiment and national jealousy which contributed to the lack of harmony between French metropolitan and Irish bishop when John England came to Charleston and Ambrose Maréchal was archbishop of Baltimore. But it was by England's adoption of a suggestion of the Holy See that the initial discord arose.

It was to be expected that Father Le Mercier would face extreme difficulties in Charleston. He arrived during Father Gallagher's absence in Rome and the trustees refused to receive him as pastor. Two years later, on the feast of the Assumption, Archbishop Carroll took the last drastic step at his command and suspended Father Gallagher who had then returned to Charleston. He left him, however, the privilege of offering Mass in his own house.

This was enough for the rebellious trustees. They prevailed

upon the Doctor to abuse this privilege, and in less than no time he opened a public chapel in his home. Then the trustees decided that the most effective way to exterminate the French priest and at the same time show Archbishop Carroll they intended to run things their own way would be to tear down the church. Only the indignation of a majority of the laity who had voted these trustees into office prevented a fulfillment of this plan. Division of loyalties was no longer a hidden circumstance. For reasons unrecorded Father Le Mercier returned to France the following year.

Subsequent repentances on the part of Father Gallagher give some hint that in time he might have thoroughly mended his warped attitude toward ecclesiastical authority. Talented though he was, he apparently had more than the one glaring weakness. His vanity is quite evident, for events seem to show that had this not been flattered first by the Augustinian, Father Browne, and second by the undisciplined laity encouraged by Father Browne, Dr. Gallagher's story might very well have had a happier ending. Developments indicate that it was not Father Gallagher, but his friend, the Reverend Robert Browne, who was in truth the keystone of the Charleston Schism.

Father Gallagher's first peace with and submission to Archbishop Carroll was followed by a request from the trustees that he be reappointed pastor of St. Mary's. This Bishop Carroll granted on December 3, 1806, and for four years all seemed well in the long range view from Baltimore to Charleston. Then, during a temporary absence of their pastor who was given to trips north to solicit funds for his parish, the trustees promptly adopted some new rules. These, among other things, excluded the pastor from all their meetings, demanded that communications between pastor and trustees should be in writing, and gave to the trustees full control and administration of Church property. In a series of "Admonitions" dated

January 20, 1811, Father Gallagher, without success, tried to show the trustees the error of their ways. In this he was supported by Bishop Carroll.

Then, in 1812, following Dr. Gallagher's insistence that he required an assistant, and that there were now in Charleston enough Catholics of French blood to warrant a priest of that nationality, Bishop Carroll appointed Joseph Picot Limoelan de la Clorivière as assistant pastor in Charleston. Yet when this French priest arrived Fathers Gallagher and Browne joined the trustees in an effort to expel him. Reporting the impossibility of the situation to Bishop Carroll, Father Clorivière asked for his *Exeat* which was given him November 3, 1814, "written with a heavy heart." Apparently once abroad and removed from the scene, perspective and the "heavy heart" of the archbishop had effect, and in the following November Father Clorivière was back in Charleston, determined to hold fast for the sake of those devout Catholics who would have order and the Sacraments undefiled by canonical irregularities.

It was in this year, 1814-1815, that the Reverend Robert Browne practically abandoned the Catholics of Augusta to remain in Charleston. When Father Clorivière returned, Robert Browne did not go immediately to Augusta, and so it was that when, a few weeks later, news of Archbishop Carroll's death reached Charleston, the latter was there to announce it to Sunday worshipers. Whatever loose restraint had existed between cleric and lay personalities was instantly relaxed upon receipt of this sad information, not only in Charleston, but elsewhere as well. Archbishop Carroll was succeeded by an American, Archbishop Neale, who lived but two years, and in 1817 the see of Baltimore acquired its third archbishop, a Frenchman, Ambrose Maréchal. Racial animosities throughout the American Church were now given full play.

Archbishop Carroll had been in his grave but an instant, so to say, when in Charleston the pastor of the Augusta church openly defied the appointment of Father Clorivière which Carroll's successor had confirmed. Archbishop Neale ordered Father Browne to return immediately to Augusta. The latter's lips and pen described obedience, but his will was contrary and so his person remained in Charleston. Father Clorivière explained to Bishop Neale that the root of the clerical dislike for himself was that he was "more scrupulous in many things than Father Gallagher has been for twenty years."

Apparently he felt the odds against him too strong and again asked permission to leave the country, but later informed Bishop Neale that his many friends in Charleston "Alarmed . . . by my resignation . . . propose seriously to form a separate congregation." If the archbishop would agree to this Father Clorivière would remain there. "A division or another Chapel should produce some religious advantages," he explained, adding, "and it is perhaps to bring them, that Providence has permitted all these troubles."

Early in 1816, to hasten the realization of peace so desired by a large group of Charleston's Catholics, Archbishop Neale revoked the faculties of both Gallagher and Browne and on February 26 appointed Father Clorivière sole pastor of St. Mary's. In March when Father Gallagher returned from one of his northern trips and discovered what had happened, he rallied the trustees and ordered Father Clorivière from the church and seized the church register from the lawfully appointed pastor. This action could have but one result. The Charleston Schism was now in full flower. With the approval of Archbishop Neale, Father Clorivière opened another Chapel.

At St. Mary's, in defiance of the archbishop's declaration, Fathers Gallagher and Browne resumed all pastoral functions; and Father Gallagher, who now had ambitions to become

bishop of Charleston, sent Father Clorivière a Latin rescript forbidding him to maintain a separate chapel in Charleston. Also, as might be expected, Fathers Gallagher and Browne again appealed to Rome. This time, since Archbishop Neale had not kept Rome fully informed, the Holy See, acting more quickly than usual, commanded the archbishop of Baltimore to remove Father Clorivière from Charleston, to lift all censures and irregularities and restore all faculties to Fathers Gallagher and Browne.

On the ground that this order could only have been issued on the basis of misrepresentations and falsifications Archbishop Neale refused to obey it. When he made the full facts known to Rome, the decision on the appeals was immediately revoked, but not until it had done great harm throughout the American Church.

The "joker" in the situation, if such it can be called, is that before the triumphant Robert Browne could return to this country with the documents in his favor and in favor of Father Gallagher, the latter, removed for some months from the Augustinian's influence, repented again, and went to Baltimore to resubmit to the archbishop's authority. On December 17, 1816, Neale reported this fact to the pastor at Charleston, Father Clorivière: ". . . Let us bless and praise God," he wrote, "Who has converted his [Gallagher's] heart most wonderfully!" And he then continued:

Now let us turn our eyes to the poor deluded people he has left behind him — all those, who attended at all or any of his sacrilegious functions during his *irregularity* incurred the same censures as he had. But we must have compassion on them . . . though there may be many who will frustrate all our endeavors, still we must refrain from all humorsome harshness with them. . . . No one is to be turned out of church unless for bad behaviour in it. As to the church, which the seditious party holds and wherein they have perpetuated such scandalous doings, I hold it *interdicted* and forbid either Mass to be said or any

other spiritual functions to be performed therein. And as it appears that two lawful Pastors have been driven from that church by its trustees or vestrymen, who pretend to a right of choosing their Pastor because they pay him a salary, I am determined and I here declare that the said church shall be held *interdicted* 'till it moulders into dust, unless the lawfully appointed Pastor be wholly independent of the Trustees both as to the tenure of the Church and the temporal means of his support.

With things in this state, the archbishop appointed Father Clorivière "my Grand Vicar for the Carolinas and Georgia; but you must place no priest anywhere without my prior knowledge and consent."

Strangely — or is it? — Dr. Gallagher's submission only increased the opposition of the trustees which was now bolstered by the triumphant return of the falsifying Father Browne. Upon seeing the documents he brought from the Holy See, Archbishop Neale wrote directly to the Head of the Church:

Most Holy Father, is it thus the faith is propagated? Is this the way to treat archbishops who in penury, amid countless difficulties and miseries, labor for the faith and salvation of souls even to decrepit age, and who sink under the bitter burthen? I can scarcely believe that such an order emanated from the Holy See, or surely if it did emanate, it must have been obtained surreptitiously: for by this course, the door is opened to every rebellion in this distant country, and means are given, as I think, for the destruction of religion, for the children of this world are more prudent than the children of light. Before truth can reach Rome deceit and falsehood have already occupied the ground, and because they are supported by the testimony of faithless men, they find credit and advocates, my declarations being neglected because they are not upheld by the number and zeal of men without faith, or because my poverty does not permit me to have a procurator or a defender at Rome, for I and my brethren, bishops of this country, are much poorer than the rest of the clergy. . . .

Pope Pius VII was swiftly touched by this appeal from his American archbishop. He lost no time in a thorough examination of the evidences in the case, and in writing to Archbishop Neale, July 9, 1817, in terms of consolation:

Your letter of April 13th last came duly to our hands, sixty-five days after it had been sent. [Which indicates the Holy Father replied one month and two days after its receipt.] Though we were then in ill health, which, thank God, is now much better, we did not delay in taking up for consideration the matters mentioned therein, on account of their importance and our love for you . . . we have examined accurately and minutely . . . the whole affair; which, indeed, did not present great difficulty to us, since from several letters which we have received here, . . . [we were] already in possession of certain knowledge concerning the public scandal given by Father Simon Felix Gallagher, and the insupportable obstinacy with which he has not only shown himself incorrigible for many years, but by means of which he has twice attempted to deceive the . . . Congregation [de Propaganda Fide]. . . . Therefore, by the decision of the Congregation, and by our judicial act, the appeal is entirely at an end, and you, our venerable brother, are at liberty to proceed with full and discretionary power against the said Gallagher and his associate, Robert Browne, for we have resolved to approve and maintain whatever measures you may adopt.

This consolation should have lightened the heavy heart of Archbishop Neale, but it could not, for that heart had ceased its beat twenty-one days before this letter was written.

The third archbishop of Baltimore was Ambrose Maréchal who quickly informed Fathers Gallagher and Browne, "rebel and self-justifier" respectively, that all correspondence between them and the see of Baltimore was closed. These two, meanwhile, advertised in Charleston and abroad that the revocation of Rome's favorable decision on their appeal was a deliberate forgery, and they continued to practice their ministry.

So, in the late fall of 1818, Ambrose Maréchal sent to Charleston the two Jesuits, Fathers Fenwick and Wallace. Father Clorivière was released and left in December. Benedict Fenwick lifted the interdict from St. Mary's. And having once again repented, Father Gallagher was reinstated and sent as pastor to Savannah.

And then, while Ambrose Maréchal sent written advices to the Holy See that the whole Southland problem might be

solved by erecting the Carolinas and Georgia into a separate diocese, advancing Benedict Fenwick as his choice of bishop of Charleston, Father Browne urged the still rebellious trustees and their adherents to invite an order priest then in Ireland, and in no way connected with Charleston history, to visit the Jansenist archbishop of Utrecht for consecration as first bishop of "The Independent Catholick Church of the United States." He was invited, after such consecration to come to Charleston where, the bidders informed him, they were "tyrannized over by the French Ecclesiastical Junta."

The order priest then in Ireland immediately sent the Charleston request to Pius VII. It served to hasten Rome's favorable decision upon the suggestion of Ambrose Maréchal and on June 18, 1820, the Holy See required the necessary documents be prepared to establish the diocese of Charleston. Contrary to the suggestion of Maréchal, however, on July 1 it nominated John England, parish priest of Bandon, first bishop of Charleston. This nomination was a deep disappointment to Archbishop Maréchal who quite naturally felt, perhaps, that Charleston's bishop should be one close enough to the scene to be thoroughly familiar with all the past history of Catholicism in this territory. When for reasons difficult for the layman, and perhaps the cleric, too, to fathom, the Holy See removed all censures from Father Robert Browne and strongly recommended him to John England as familiar with South Carolina and Georgia, the archbishop of Baltimore was dismayed, puzzled, and disturbed with a sense of frustration. Since John England readily acted upon this strong recommendation from Rome it is hardly to be expected that Maréchal anticipated his coming with unrestrained joy or that he could in the least agree with Bishop England's suggestion that "the principle of oblivion" would produce harmony. Between Ambrose Maréchal and John England it did not.

.. 5 ..

My membership in the Irish Church has terminated; not that I have loved my country less; not that I have left the communion of its hierarchy; not that I preferred any other field for my labors; not that I was ambitious of situation: my rank is indeed more elevated, (but) my situation more depressed; the comforts of my ministry materially diminished, and the difficulties of discharging its duties materially increased. This, and more than this I anticipated, and my anticipations have been realized.



... as the dignity of OUR order is great, so is OUR responsibility awful; ...

THE new Bishop of Charleston cannot have entertained any least notion that his arrival at his see city would instantly resolve all clerical and *trusteemia* problems. But it is to be presumed that he came in confident hope that he could carry out with relative immediateness his private instructions from the Holy See to bring "peace and order" to the Church in the Southland. He had been fully informed by Rome of the difficulties. He knew in complete detail the troubles of Charleston, the identity of the priests and laymen who had fomented these troubles, and also, by report, the southern temperament.

Yet not until four years after his arrival was *trusteemia* finally slain. This death was accomplished, eventually, by

necessarily drastic measures including the execution of a constitution for his diocese adopted November 24, 1823. Six years later this had the full support of the First Provincial Council of Baltimore: seven years later the Holy See gave its full approval. The latter approval could have come several years earlier but for representations at Rome by persons who disliked or were jealous of the Bishop of Charleston. The former approval, which was by indirection only, came at the earliest possible moment because only by the persistent effort of John England did the provincial councils come into being. The first, in 1829, had to await the succession of the fourth archbishop of Baltimore, James Whitefield, an Englishman: the animosity of the Frenchman, Ambrose Maréchal, toward the young, Irish, and energetic Bishop of Charleston preventing such a realization while he lived.

It was with no little consternation that Maréchal advised the Holy See of the new Charleston Constitution. It was an innovation in the American Church. Maréchal described it as "democratic." In the confusion of his amazement this word may have slipped from his pen. It was a highly unpopular word in Europe at the time, and as applied to American Church affairs smattered of Protestant administrative practices. For it was the principles of civil democracy which had been adopted by Catholic laymen into their rules and bylaws by which their boards of trustees were knit together. Some of these had caused the wreckage of ecclesiastical authority and discipline. In this connection, then, the word "democratic" indicated a defiance of Canon Law which, in many places, had spread the virus of *trusteomania*.

Few American bishops looked with favor upon the Bishop of Charleston; in fact, he and two other bishops were not invited to the consecration of James Whitefield as archbishop of Baltimore. John England brought many originalities to the

American Church; and Roman discipline, always shy of innovation even such as is within the bounds of Canon Law and ecclesiastical prerogative, shuddered as the Christopher in Carolina set about singlehanded to conquer trustee problems. Moreover, not yet in Charleston a fortnight, he delivered a pastoral letter to his flock January 7, 1821 — a startling innovation in the American Church where no previous bishop had issued such an inaugural message. In the sixty-eight days consumed by his Atlantic crossing he had ample time to prepare this message. It was not long before this salt of the southern Church also abolished pews in his churches, thus putting the rich and poor on an equal footing before man as well as God.

His first pastoral, delivered on his second Sunday in Charleston and sent by mail to all Catholics within his jurisdiction but not within range of his voice, emphasized the disobedience of Adam, through pride — a word of warning to troublesome trustees. It stressed also the ecclesiastical authority which is the cornerstone, the rock, of the true Church established by the Redeemer in whom, because of Adam's pride, all stood in need; and offered a strong reminder to his flock of the obligation to distinguish and appropriately render to Caesar his prerogatives and to God, His.

The discovery of these latter, he cautioned, “. . . is the result of the investigation of facts, and not of the examination of opinions.”

“In proportion as the dignity of Our order is great,” he stated, “so is Our responsibility awful; . . .” and he recommended that:

. . . temperance, justice, mercy, benevolence, charity, piety, modesty, and chastity be your characteristic virtues; for you are called upon to serve a God of purity and perfection. Do not place confidence in your youth, your strength, your health, nor your riches—for you are the certain victims of death; you have been sentenced to return to the dust from which you have been originally taken, and you know not the day, nor

the hour; wherefore WE beseech you to be always prepared, for the Son of man will come at the moment when He is least expected.

So saying, in another week he left Charleston for a visitation of his diocese which, added to visits to other bishops to the north, and to Baltimore where he did not see the archbishop who had already set out for Rome, consumed the best part of a year. During this time he determined to bring forth a reprint of the English Missal with a preface of his own. For this intention, particularly for a discussion of the preface, he solicited the co-operative counsel of the archbishop and his suffragans. This was not forthcoming. In this connection John England suggested to Ambrose Maréchal a periodic council of the hierarchy. To him Maréchal was silent, but not to Rome. He looked askance upon the venture. Sure of his ground and the spiritual benefit of his plan, John England proceeded alone.

Later he urged the archbishop to call together the American bishops to consult upon remedies for *trusteeomania*. On the back of this letter Ambrose Maréchal made a terse notation and filed it away. So, again, on this problem within the diocese of Charleston, John England proceeded alone. Child and bishop of the Holy Roman Church, he knew that while the Church had centuries he had but a brief time in which to bring about the "peace and order" Rome had placed upon him as an obligation. "The longest life is a very short duration," he said at fifty-six, but he knew it well at thirty-four. So he proceeded alone and unsupported on many points, as for instance the establishment of his weekly Catholic newspaper, using this to meet a challenge which, as O'Brien says, "should have inspired the united action of the Catholic leaders in the country." Even today John England continues to stand alone, head and shoulders above his hierarchal contemporaries in the respected opinion of Monsignor Peter Guilday.

On January 15, 1821, when he set about his visitation he

left St. Mary's trustees with no more to chew upon than his week-old pastoral letter. He would begin dealings with them on his return. He appointed Benedict Fenwick, S.J., who would be spared to him briefly, his vicar-general and told him to secure a building for a temporary chapel and to purchase land for a cathedral church. When known to the trustees, these instructions gave them food for guessing.

This was the Bishop's intention. In fact, he gave the trustees two years to come to their senses. Then his forbearance gave place to action. From March to November, 1822, he negotiated with them. But when in December of that year they presented a bill to the state Legislature which would prevent any change in the charter of St. Mary's he gave up all hope of bringing them to reason. He did not forego the opportunity occasioned by an invitation from the Legislature to address it. He appeared before the House of Representatives in Columbia, December 8. But when he returned to Charleston he moved his residence from St. Mary's rectory to a house on Broad Street not far from a temporary chapel which he began January 28, 1822. This was ready in April. The mere shell, enclosing an area 80 feet by 48 feet, cost \$2,200. It was then that St. Mary's lost the distinction of being the cathedral church. Neither bishop nor priest would officiate there. By this time the Bishop had all other church properties under his control, with title vested in his name to descend to his successor. Bluntly he told the obstinate trustees, "It is folly to attempt raising the edifice of Catholicity upon Calvinistic foundations."

Two years later the trustees surrendered and St. Mary's Church which in twenty-odd years had been twice closed by ecclesiastical censure was once again opened for worship.

So by his diocesan constitution, which embraced such headings as doctrine, government, property title, membership, and

so forth, and by a firm exercise of his responsibility and authority, John England eliminated the trustee cancer from his diocese while it still flourished elsewhere. And within that elsewhere there was as much criticism of his actions as there was jealousy of his success on the part of those who did not possess his vigorous initiative.

Securing an adequate clergy was a problem which would harass him throughout his episcopate. In January, 1822, he opened a diocesan seminary in Columbia. The Jesuit, James Wallace, later relieved of his vows by the Society, was in Columbia, infinitely more absorbed by mathematical propositions than by the apostolate of his vocation. In this same year Bishop England opened the philosophical and classical seminary in Charleston. He intended the revenue to support candidates for the priesthood. Initial enrollment was encouraging, but when registration reached 130, all Protestant, sectarian pulpiteers heatedly warned of inevitable "contamination." More than 100 students were withdrawn from the seminary where the only subjects taught were English, belles-lettres, classics, mathematics, and philosophy. The Bishop and president of the faculty held that the aim of education should be "severe mental discipline and habitual restraint" in order to check wayward human nature. In time he brought two teaching orders of nuns to his diocese and opened a school for Negro children; but this he was obliged to discontinue in the face of civil opposition to the education of that race.

But his venture to support clerical students met no less a setback than his acquisition of candidates. These were so scarce as to be no great strain on his meager finances.

One of these scarce candidates who proved to be rare by his faith and good works was the Reverend John Bermingham. While Bishop England struggled for candidates he had the services of a few priests — some good. The Reverend Denis

Corkery came with him from Ireland, but soon died. Father Fenwick, later bishop of Boston and one of those not invited to the elevation of James Whitefield, was but temporarily in Charleston. Bishop England sent the Reverend Robert Browne, who for reasons unintelligible had been more or less foisted upon him by the Holy See, to Savannah. Here he soon tired of the vigilant eye of his bishop and departed from the diocese. Gladly the Bishop gave Dr. Gallagher, whom he described as "perfectly useless," his coveted *Exeat*. In Augusta he replaced the Samuel Cooper of "injudicious zeal" with a Father McCarthy whom he soon dismissed for negligence, as he did also in August, 1822, the Reverend Henry Doyle for misconduct. In this same month another priest decided to depart from his diocese. In Charleston, itself, he had a worthy soul, Reverend John McEncroe who volunteered his assistance in October, 1822. So at the close of his second year he had good priests in Columbia, Charleston, and Locust Grove. Augusta was without a pastor and Robert Browne was soon to leave Savannah. "I am sometimes appalled," wrote the Bishop in September to Judge Gaston, "when I look at the state of destitution in which my Diocese is, — but I trust to Heaven I shall see better days. . . ."

His "trust to Heaven" was no idle phrase. Here was his main strength and reliance. He was often found before the Blessed Sacrament, alone, seeking the only aid seemingly sympathetic enough to help him. About this time a rumor spread through the American Church that John England had asked the Holy See for another bishopric. There is no evidence from his own pen to this effect. Understanding the opposition to his initiative on the part of the American archbishop and others, he did offer his resignation to the Holy See if this authority determined such was essential to "ease of mind" within the American Church. There is no indication that he

wanted to leave Charleston. John England was not the man to drop everything and run in the face of opposition. His youth and his faith, his indifference to worldly personal possessions, and his perfectly Christian charity for those not blessed with the gift of faith, all contrived to enable him to face with courage, if not indifference, every difficulty and discouragement, every jealous snub and criticism. Not any prelate could rise above such obstacles, but John England was the exception: he did not consciously pamper his human vanity.

As a missionary bishop he recrossed the Atlantic four times to beg for his diocese, not omitting direct supplications to the Holy Father and Propaganda. In this country some enemies of Catholicism, such as his Charleston neighbor, Samuel B. Morse (writing in the *New York Journal of Commerce* in 1834), advertised these journeys as forerunners of the overthrow of the United States government by the papacy. This would be accomplished by force of foreign funds, and force of "foreign turbulence imported by shiploads," by riot and ignorance encouraged in hundreds of "priest-controlled machines."

Many more than four times, in fact annually, he visited his own diocese, traversing its rough byways, its jagged sea coast, and its rickety railroads with far less comfort than he encountered from a health-restoring two-month crossing to Europe. On these visitations, his especial concern, aside from his inability to supply priests for every city and hamlet, was the weak and lost sheep. More often than not he met a complete indifference. Isolated, it was "good sense" socially and commercially for these not to identify themselves as Catholic: prudent children of this world!

Yet wherever he traveled throughout the Carolinas and Georgia — even through North Carolina — the Roman Catholic

Bishop, with exceptions so rare as to be forgotten, was cordially received by non-Catholics. Mayors called on him; Protestant ministers offered their churches for his use; prominent citizens asked him to discourse upon Catholic doctrine for their enlightenment. His listeners were always predominantly non-Catholic, on the seacoast, in the Piedmont, and at the fringe of the Blue Ridge Mountains. Lucidly, candidly, thoroughly, he demonstrated to such audiences his favorite theme, namely, that the best of American political doctrines formed a heritage of the ancient Christian Church. When he failed to win converts he did remove prejudices.

Some converts he did win — many among the poor, fewer among the rich who generally inclined to postpone submission to Jesus Christ to a “more convenient season.” His confessional was as “crowded” as the churches in which he preached; he never upheld his faith by reviling those sects whose keystone was desertion of Rome. It was ever his hope and prayer that, aware of Catholic truth, the inquiring mind of America would censure him who “. . . estimated his sanctity by his vulgarity,” (in attacks upon Catholicism) or conceived “. . . that he is more acceptable to the Creator, as he is more offensive to His creature.”

When, co-operating actively with many others to offset the effectiveness of John England’s apostolate, a Protestant Episcopal bishop of Maryland complained derisively that his religion was a “wonderful system,” the Bishop of Charleston agreed. “It is a system deriving its origin from the Deity who first planted it in the human heart.” The only principle of Catholicism, he replied, is that “man is bound to adore his Creator — this is the summary of our religion.” And then he enlarged:

In wonders the Apostles go forth to victory and to death. In wonders the world is convinced how the great principle should be carried into

practice.' But the human mind is restless and speculation again misleads man from the evidence of fact. Man begins to inquire how God can do these things instead of inquiring whether he has proof of God's declaration that He has done them. Separations are made, nations fall away, new nations are converted, empires are over turned, kingdoms are destroyed, death sweeps dynasties from their thrones and their monuments vanish at the touch of time. Oblivion blots their names from the memories of men. Ages have passed away, everything else is new, save that system, which in the midst of wonders, the Son of God has permanently established. . . . Every civilized nation has embraced the system, and in every civilized nation it has been opposed and persecuted. And yet, in every age its adherents form the vast majority of the civilized portion of the human race. It began in wonders; it has been propagated by wonders. . . . The very perpetuation of the system is a wonder and will continue so until time shall be no more.

The influence of such an apostle could not be confined to one diocese and as a matter of fact it did spread throughout the land. Historians are prone to lament that the Holy See "wasted" such a talented defender on a new and obscure diocese. It is true that in the early days of his episcopate John England was mercilessly criticized as an innovator, as overzealous — not even his youth being accepted in excuse — as one who required careful watching. Yet it was not too long before other bishops found advantage to faith by inviting the Bishop of Charleston to preach in their own domains; and nine years after his coming all supported his increasing insistence that the American Church waned for want of a periodic conclave of her bishops.

His first suggestion on this point was made three months after his arrival in this country. "Do not deem it arrogance in me, the youngest in every way among the Bishops of the Union, that I suggest to your Grace the propriety of assembling us at some early period for the purpose of having established some uniform system of discipline for our Churches, and of having common council and advice upon a variety of important topics regarding the causes and remedies of those

disastrous contests which have torn and still do agitate this afflicted Church." Four months later, writing again to Maréchal, this time from Raleigh, he said, "I cannot close this without again stating my conviction that a Synod in which we might all encourage each other and fix upon some common rule of conduct would do great good."

In this same letter, tested to exasperation, the young Bishop was most outspoken. "When your Grace wishes explanations from me, I entreat you will have the goodness to write *me*, . . ." And in the following paragraph he suggests the archbishop try one of his "innovations," "I think the adoption of the book society will do good in your diocese as it has in mine. Already I have branches in Wilmington, Washington, New Bern, Edenton, and Plymouth in this state. . . . Besides those in South Carolina and Georgia, most of the subscribers are persons not Catholics, but they have Catholic books which they read with avidity. . . ."

Book societies! Throughout three states within seven months of his coming to Charleston! Another original notion. Innovator! Swift, energetic innovator!

The following month, the problem of the reprint of the English Missal still rankling the archbishop, John England wrote:

I also flatter myself that when your Grace comes to know me better than you do, you will, notwithstanding the awful office committed to you by the Church, have the same reliance upon me that I have in you. For indeed if I were informed that your Grace was editing any work, though I am not a simple priest, I would have sufficient reliance upon your Grace's piety and abilities and orthodoxy most cheerfully and unhesitatingly to put my name thereto and encourage it, and thus to show that we were brethren; but perhaps a day may come when the American Archbishop would place the same confidence in an American Bishop that Irish Archbishops and Bishops did in an Irish priest.

Not quite a month later, a critic — an Irish archbishop —

strengthened Maréchal's coolness by describing the Bishop of Charleston as ". . . a man of the keenest intellect and piety and a man of great zeal, but . . . he lacks sacerdotal meekness and prudence. . . . He should at least consult his Metropolitan and his fellow bishops before he begins anything new. . . ."

Did Ambrose Maréchal pause here in his reading to hear conscience remind him how often his suffragan had sought just such consultation? Or did he continue, deaf to such promptings as the critic voiced his very fears, ". . . or he should propose his plans to the Holy See, lest he upset the Church. . . ." The writer told Maréchal he should restrain John England's "impetuous temper and teach him at the same time not to be more wise than it behooveth to be wise, but to be wise unto sobriety."

To the credit of the Archbishop it must be recorded that once he held before his eyes the much discussed Missal he endorsed it highly and aided its circulation and use. Meanwhile, in February, 1823, Bishop England wrote him, ". . . with respect to the Synod I have done. I perceive it is useless to press it. But my convictions are still the same."

Did he know that in May, 1822, the Holy See had advised the archbishop of Baltimore to call a provincial council?

When Maréchal died John England renewed his plea, and one of the first acts of James Whitefield was to set October, 1829, as the tentative season of the First Provincial Council. The fifth decree of this Council related to *trusteeomania*:

Since lay-trustees have too often abused the power given them by the civil law to the great detriment of religion and not without scandal to the faithful, we very greatly desire that in the future no church shall be built or consecrated unless it shall have been assigned by written instrument to the bishop in whose diocese it is to be built, wherever this can be done. . . . However, by this decree we do not desire to interfere with the method which the Bishop of Charleston now follows in his diocese.

It may be that John England's greatest influence upon the American Church remains the provincial councils, still held. For out of these has come uniform discipline and co-operative direction of the American Church. In 1829 the Council reflected a better morale among clergy and laity. More than this, both clergy and laity witnessed at long last the harmony of nationalities in conference assembled. The First Provincial Council of Baltimore sounded the death knell of racial jealousies which had bred so many unhappy animosities within the American Church Militant.

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I am an enemy to intemperance, but I am also an enemy to pharisaical restraint.

I am a friend to the bringing of children together for religious instruction on Sunday; but I am an enemy to organizing them into political factions to promote ambition under the guise of piety.

I am a friend to the liberal and pious education of a respectable ministry, and to their being sent to cultivate the desert places of our land; but I am an enemy to training up youth in ferocious hatred to their Catholic fellow citizens, whose tenets they are taught to misrepresent. For thus they are unfitted for the work of peace and are sent to brandish swords of devastation, and to apply the torches of incendiaries.

I am a friend to the diffusion of the Gospel, but an enemy to the vilifying of those who preserved it through the vicissitudes of ages, of revolutions, of barbarism, of philosophy, of infidelity, of crime and of corruption.

I am an ardent admirer, a devoted enthusiast, and a sworn friend to the liberties and the constitutions of our American confederation; therefore, I am irreconcilably inimical to every effort, whether of fraud or of folly, to violate their principles by disfranchising any portion of our citizens under the pretext of their religious mistakes.



We are always assailed by speculation. We always answer by facts.

IT IS possible that some readers may discount the assertion that when John England reached Charleston the Holy

Ghost accompanied him. That he came in full possession of the seven gifts of the Holy Ghost his mission here testifies. Like every Catholic, he received these in Confirmation. Co-operating with the gifts of wisdom and understanding he faced his new responsibilities; without co-operation with the gifts of counsel, fortitude, and knowledge he could never have borne the weight of these manifold responsibilities; and again, without co-operation with the gifts of piety and the fear of the Lord, he could not have exerted such a dynamic influence for God and for America as he did in the brief years allotted to him in this country.

On Pentecost, A.D. 33, the first bishops of the Roman Catholic Church were huddled together in an upper room, fearful and perplexed, limited by language and erudition. Presently the Holy Ghost descended upon them, giving them, among other aids, the gift of tongues, so that all preached to every nation in their own language, although prior to the receipt of this gift not one would have been able to do so. It was as Christ had told them, not only relative to tongue, but to words: “. . . be not thoughtful beforehand what you shall speak; but whatsoever shall be given you in that hour, that speak ye. For it is not you that speak, but the Holy Ghost.”

As a direct apostolic successor of these first bishops John England inherited in one sense the gift of tongues — namely, the gift of words. The pulpit offered a wide range for his words — the right words at the right time — but he chafed at its limitations. He determined to make his words reach beyond the range of the pulpit.

The lack of a Catholic press in America was continually emphasized by the bulk of the Protestant press, opulent and secure in Protestant thought, attitude, and misconception. This he discovered without effort upon his arrival. A more astonishing discovery in 1821 was that the leaders of his Church

were utterly, coolly indifferent to the establishment of a Catholic press as a tool of vindication in the face of perpetual, unanswered attack. Twelve years previously, August 31, 1809, Reverend Gabriel Richard, S.S., had brought forth in Detroit a small publication in French and English devoted to the "Catholic essay." Though under this heading much effective writing is possible, there is room, too, for much that is ineffective. Posterity has little or no information on the influence of Father Richard's effort: obviously it was short lived and, we must conclude, ineffective.

Because of his effort, John England's *United States Catholic Miscellany* cannot have the distinction of being the first Catholic publication in this country; but it can and does hold, unchallenged, the distinction of being the first Catholic weekly newspaper published here. As an infant publication it twice suffered a close call with death owing to the neglect of those for whom it had been created; but after recovery from the second close call it survived until 1861 when the upheaval of war and an historic fire suppressed it permanently.

During his first year in this country Bishop England spent a great portion of his time traveling, not only through his own diocese, a natural duty and inclination, but also north along the seaboard to Baltimore, to Philadelphia, and to New York. This meant that for uncounted miles he jogged along in rickety stagecoaches over hard, deeply rutted roads either mercilessly sun baked or oozing with mud demonstrative of the power of vacuum suction. He lodged in country inns or main-road taverns and on such travels and in such places he naturally met persons of every description, learned and unlearned, the aristocrat and the so-called "ordinary man." He was not a silent traveler and personal identification among travelers was more common under such miserable conditions than in our time when ease and comfort are conducive to

exclusive aloofness. Sometimes it would happen, during an overnight pause, Bishop England would preach in a proffered Protestant church or local courthouse. Such occasions gave him ample opportunity next day, while slowly progressing onward, to gather from the ever frank, outspoken American the general ideas commonly held here of his coreligionists and the tenets of their creed.

Among these ideas were the fantastic notions that Catholics held the pope to be the Lord God on earth; that the pope had commanded the Bible to be destroyed and had substituted superstition for true religion; that he was a monster craving human blood and held temporal power over all the goods and possessions of all Christians; that he was the beast of the Apocalypse whose will could change virtue into vice and vice into virtue; that every Catholic was his sworn slave; and that his place of residence was a "pesthouse of abominations." Further, that Catholics could commit any sin or criminal act merely upon the advance payment of a stipulated fee, "an exceedingly moderate charge," especially for such items as incest, murder, sodomy, parricide, and kindred moral misadventures.

An astute, tireless reader of the Protestant and secular press, the Bishop of Charleston was forced to the conclusion that a Catholic press would be the most efficacious means of refuting these calumnies which he well understood were not always wholly malicious: after three hundred years of such "informative" propaganda they were cherished as Gospel truths by a great majority. Alone, unaided, and unsupported, this valiant Christopher attempted to tear down the fruit of such propaganda which had been fostered here by English kings, English parliaments, and English printing presses.

Writing in February, 1822, to the leading Catholic layman in North Carolina, William Gaston of New Bern, who was an exception in that he advanced a sizable loan to establish

the *Miscellaney*, the Bishop explained his objectives: to publish fair and simple statements of Catholic doctrine from authentic documents, together with plain and correct views of the grounds and consequences of those doctrines, all to be "inoffensively exhibited"; the refutation of calumnies; the examination of and illustration of misrepresented facts of history; biographies of eminent ecclesiastics and others connected with the Church; reviews of books for and against Catholicity; and events connected with religion in all parts of the world.

Refining this prospectus in the first issue, which appeared June 5, 1822, he noted the principles of the *Miscellaney* would be "candor, moderation, fidelity, charity and diligence."

To pay printing and paper costs, not to mention also the necessary expense of circulation, the Bishop required a revenue of one thousand dollars a year, so he set the subscription rate for fifty-two issues, four to eight pages quarto size, three columns to a page on good quality paper, at three and a half dollars a year. Three hundred subscribers would bring in sufficient revenue, then, to meet costs, and he had every ground to anticipate many more subscribers than this. The revenue over and above costs he planned to devote to the support of his seminary, for another of his visions was the training as soon as might be of a native clergy to satisfy the jealous nationalism of the new republic.

The *United States Catholic Miscellaney* was in no sense intended to be a purely diocesan paper. It would be the only Catholic weekly in existence in the States and was, therefore, intended for all the American Catholics, conservatively numbering some fifty thousand at that time. He also expected that the thinking, intelligent non-Catholic would subscribe, welcoming at last an opportunity to hear the "other side" of a matter long crippled by rigid "censorship." Here such non-

Catholics need no longer suffer lack of freedom of speech and thought; here no government shackled their opinions, making up their minds for them and forcibly keeping them so made up. John England had every confidence in that inherent desire of the human mind to know the truth. So the *Miscellaney*, making its initial bow in mid-1822, was designed to be a bond of communication between all Catholics in the country, bringing to each diocese and parish news of others more removed, and, in the "age of enlightenment," affording genuine enlightenment to the well-disposed non-Catholic. To survive through its first year, three hundred subscribers would suffice. No doubt the Bishop confidently smiled to himself: three hundred! Why, there were thousands of Catholics who would welcome this public voice in defense of their tenets and practices; equally there were thousands of non-Catholics, fair and reasonably minded, who would welcome a Catholic voice on Catholic subjects.

But what seemed so fair in June became a gray disillusion in December, six brief months later, when the *Miscellaney* was forced to suspend publication, because the founder and editor was five hundred dollars in debt. In those short months not even one hundred and fifty Catholics in the entire United States had subscribed. With rare exceptions such as William Gaston, the Catholics of John England's own diocese were wholly indifferent to his enterprise; and yet here, as elsewhere, over one hundred Protestant publications of national circulation continued their vituperative protests against the ancient faith.

Undaunted, Bishop England sought help from his flock in Georgia; he delicately intimated to William Gaston he would welcome a further extension of his loan, an extension of time and money, if possible, for he assured this sympathetic layman, he would resume publication; this "defeat" would not

silence him. He added that he hoped to resume in March, 1823; but the *Miscellaney* did not actually reappear until the first Wednesday in January, 1824. A few more Catholics now subscribed, Mr. Gaston did extend his loan in the two directions asked by his Bishop, but despite these aids, after two years of gasping respiration and fluctuating pulse the *Miscellaney* collapsed again at the close of 1825.

"At present we close our task," wrote the Bishop-Editor in the final issue, "it remains with our fellow Catholics to determine whether we shall resume it. Should no opportunity be afforded us, we must rest patiently content to witness, as we have long done in silence, our religion reviled, and our tenets misrepresented to a people who are anxious for the discovery of truth but who are amused with fabrications — to a people who condemn us because they do not know us."

The Bishop of Charleston had no notion that this reproach would immediately produce a bumper crop of opportunities enabling him to bring out the *Miscellaney* the following week as usual. He knew his people too well for that; but the second collapse made him more determined than ever that his project should live. He had explicit faith in the need for it and the integrity of its objectives. Obstinate he prepared for its recuperation. He stubbornly refused to recognize a mandate in chronic Catholic indifference. Already sorely in debt through the inertia of those whom he served, he proceeded to go in deeper than ever. God had sent him to America with a great deal to say and John England proposed to say it. So he purchased his own printing press and type and gave these over to his students for manual operation.

Again he wrote William Gaston, frankly and fully stating his reaction to the dormant loyalty of his flock. Relating the cost of his printing press to be nigh onto one thousand dollars, he intimates, in his justification what may have been a

mitigating circumstance in regard to lack of Catholic support. It was bad enough to the faithful, surely, that their religion suffered such wholesale disapprobation: it must have been a further painful humiliation that the printer engaged upon the *Miscellaney* frequently "disgraced" them by his carelessness, by "shameful misprints and dirty sheets which have been a subject of mirth instead of edification." If the faithful could not be proud of the physical appearance of their mouthpiece they could not be moved to yield the price of a subscription on the merit of what it said. Although the opportunity presents itself, John England does not in writing lay the unhappy aspect and misprints of the *Miscellaney* to any deliberate intent on the part of those whom he paid to produce it.

Like a cut-and-come-again plant, in July, 1826, the *United States Catholic Miscellaney* appeared again. This time its recovery, though costly, was complete. It survived until events beyond the control of its supporters caused, in 1861, a permanent suspension of publication.

From 1826 forward to the death of its founder the *Miscellaney* rendered vilification of the Roman Catholic Church an act of mortal editorial consequence to the attacker. It ceaselessly barraged public opinion with logic, erudition, and eloquence, noticeably changing the course of such opinion to the benefit of the Church and the faithful. The torch of the *Miscellaney* raised Catholic chins high; the stench of scorched vermin, of propaganda proved false and filthy filled their nostrils. It became utterly impossible for persons who respected their own intelligence and integrity to continue a blind faith in the abominable calumnies which some die-hard pens and tongues now scratched and screeched in increased volume as their falsity was so plainly, so reasonably, and so soundly exposed to human reason. The *United States Catholic Miscel-*

laney, more than the individual efforts of any Catholic cleric or layman, including John England himself, demonstrated that the Roman Catholic Church was worthy of the respect and admiration of persons of breeding, education, culture, and refinement. More, the *Miscellaney* raised this oldest of all institutions to an honored position within the Union.

Under the editorship of John England, in the face of strong rival ambitions to the contrary, notably among the Presbyterians, the *Miscellaney* drilled home for all time the proposition that "Congress shall make no law respecting the establishment of religion or prohibiting the free exercise thereof."

Against this article of the Bill of Rights, rather than directly against the Roman Catholic Church, railed the *Rochester Presbyterian Observer*: "There is no neutrality, no armistice, no yielding — onward — victory or death is the watchword of the Presbyterian Church. She will be the established Church of this Union, or wade through blood to attain that just prerogative!" There is no record that the writer of these lines was in any way molested by American patriots: but had Bishop England published such a statement in the *Miscellaney*, substituting "Roman Catholic Church" for "Presbyterian Church," he would have been hailed before the high court, charged with treason, and undoubtedly hanged and his followers would have been driven from every city and village.

Another Presbyterian publication, the *Calvinist Magazine*, advocated more moderate methods to meet the alarming change of public opinion as the sound, solid paragraphs of the *Miscellaney* gained an ever wider circulation. The *Calvinist Magazine*, in measured phrases, sought to restore "sanity": "It is by no means certain that the religion of Rome will not yet extensively prevail in the United States," it began, "becoming the most formidable antagonist to the progress of

Gospel truth. That a contest must commence, or the ground must be given up, and the enemy suffered to penetrate into the very center of our country is manifest," continued the editorial. "Would it not be advisable then, to set forth in our periodicals and religious tracts, well written articles, historical, doctrinal, and controversial, that would have a tendency to expose the true spirit of Popery, and the arts of her clergy? This seems to be the most practical mode of conveying religious truths to the mind of the Catholic and will, at least, open the eyes of the nominal Protestant." Also, this would be a great deal more comfortable than "wading through blood."

Sincere in his convictions, this editor began to practice what he preached. He brought forth "religious truths" but the *United States Catholic Miscellany* stripped every one of its masquerade, pointing out that truth cannot be truth and at the same time be, as were *these*, "religious truths," contrary to logic, reason, and revelation. No blood was shed in this controversy but the wax was blasted from many ears and the tenacious barnacles of falsification scraped from many minds.

Week after week the editor of the *Miscellany* continued his exposition of fact and truth. The Protestant press of every sect from Georgia to Massachusetts, not omitting Charleston itself, protested vehemently. One lone man on one lone paper was completely demolishing the rotten props of their publications. Worse, Protestants were reading the *United States Catholic Miscellany*: the fact was evident to every pulpiteer for their vindictive sermons were having less effect, less attention, and, in some instances, drawing severe criticism from Protestant congregations. The attitude of these was not a conviction which led to mass entry into the Catholic Church, but rather one that plainly said, "Let us have less comment about our brothers and more about God and His Word." Of

course, in every such congregation, there were still many who found slander more stimulating, more absorbing, and more interesting than Scripture.

Critics of the *Miscellaney* complained weakly of the length of the explanatory articles which often ran into fifteen or twenty installments. When these complaints became numerous enough the editor of the *Miscellaney* in one short sentence removed their sting by showing it took much less space "to charge that the pope is a devil incarnate" than is required to prove he is not.

Why the editor's own religionists did not rally to his support in greater numbers than they did was as much an enigma to Editor-Author-Bishop John England as it is to Catholic editors, authors, and bishops of 1948. The financial aspect of the *United States Catholic Miscellaney* was as deep a concern as it is to present-day Catholic publications. Seldom was the paper out of the red, then only for fleeting periods. Over and over the editor prayed for Catholic support, pointing out repeatedly that only in the *Miscellaney* among the entire religious press of the country were Catholic doctrines faithfully explained, Catholic tenets vindicated, Catholic principles defended, attacks repelled, history redressed in truth — but all to little avail. Those for whom John England labored most — and the labor must have been tremendous — remained silent, clutching fast to their purses, indifferent to the apostolate of the Christopher in Carolina, but never for an instant spurning the benefits derived from that apostolate. They preened themselves in the respected status John England's pen won for them in the community and the nation. Even *The Missionary*, a Protestant publication originating from Mt. Zion, Georgia, while in the issue of April 12, 1824, deliberately or otherwise, erroneously reported sixteen articles of Catholic belief

following an eloquent sermon delivered by the Bishop of Charleston in that place, grudgingly admitted that Dr. England was a man of "talents considerably above mediocrity" and one who assuredly "commands the attention of an enlightened community."

The principles of the *Miscellaney* were "candor, moderation, fidelity, charity and diligence": did the editor, then, always speak in mild tones? Was his pen, even though always wetted with vindication, yet always light and gentle to the point of fawning appeasement? No more so than the tongue and "pen" of his Lord and Master, Jesus Christ, whose finger, writing we know not what in the dust of a public square, dispersed a mob which had assembled upon a human impulse often masquerading as "righteous moral indignation."

The Theological Repertory has made it possible for us to read spirited words from the pen of John England. This was published by a clergyman of the Protestant Episcopal Church in Washington, D. C., and slanted for the aristocrat. Loudly it called for the "extermination of Irish vermin" and in its indignation made the error of charging St. Bartholomew's Massacre to the machinations of John England, which would have made him a venerable centenarian. "The persecutions of the Romish Church have exceeded in malignity, cruelty, perseverance, extension and continuance, not only those of all other sects, but even the anti-Christian violence of the heathens," wrote the editor, Reverend William Hawley, righteously. "Papists are inconsistent with their profession," he charged, stating many were better than their profession, having no "idea of all the enormous corruptions of the faith they acknowledge," he went on, a noisy member of that group who ever feel it a duty to "their fellow man" to rescue a Catholic from his beliefs.

The Reverend William Hawley had barely laid down his pen when the Right Reverend John England was pushing his across an answering page:

You complained of my letters being severe, gross and personal. I ask you, could any severity be too great for your wanton attack upon the land of my birth and the religion of the great bulk of the Christian world? How many calumnies have I refuted? The task was easy because the fabrications were palpable, the want of correct information apparent and the desire to injure your fellow citizens manifest. My language could not be other than severe. There are writers who, even when they err, should be treated with respect, because, in their manner they continue to be gentlemen though their matter might be censurable. But when the manner is that of an outrageous drawcansir, who in his unrestrained fury insults with ribald slander the object of his hate and rushes in to destroy him, such a rowdy is supposed to have none of those feelings which, if they existed in himself, he would respect in others. . . .

Besides this pretty and becoming collection [the comments of Hawley quoted previously] he compares Irish Catholics to "wretched criminals" banished from their country; "traitorous conspirators against their country." He denounces American Catholics . . . as "opposed to the spirit of toleration" . . . as hypocrites . . . waiting only until the Romish Church shall be sufficiently powerful in this country "to seize torches to burn the Protestants"; and this man expects to be treated with courtesy.

You complain of my personality. First, I believed that writers like you did not deserve to have your feelings protected after having outraged the feelings of your unoffending fellow citizens. Secondly, I feel too deep a respect, too high a regard, too sincere an attachment towards a great number of very respectable members of the Church to which you say you belong, to wound their sensibility by identifying you and them.

Closing this long letter summarizing his controversy with the Reverend William Hawley of the Episcopal Church, Bishop England drops his severity to remind his attacker of some of the tenets of his own faith.

Their religion does not urge to such a course as you have chosen; [he continues], their charity would protect me from your dagger; their patriotism would save me from your proscription; their candor would disclaim any connection with your misrepresentations; their information would detect your historic falsehoods. Some of them are the descendants of those [French] men whose massacre, a century before my birth, you

would charge upon me. Your malice would sow between us a deadly hate, which, if we permitted it to grow, would poison the air by which we are surrounded. Whilst we take each other by the hand and lament our difference in creed, we unite in charity and affection. We trample upon your unholy cultivation of discord, and whilst I blame and condemn the cruelty of the French court toward their ancestors, their kindness soothes down much of that irritation which British cruelty has created in me. . . . Neither [of us] will charge upon the church of the other the crimes of the individuals who might be in that church. Indeed, I do not charge upon the Protestant Episcopal Church, but upon the Rev. William Hawley and his associates, the unfortunate article which I reviewed.

7

OUR EFFORTS ARE MADE to diffuse learning by the means of schools and colleges, to erect churches, and to appoint pastors for our destitute flocks — to introduce the correct knowledge of our peculiar principles and practices amongst our fellow citizens for the purpose of disabusing them of the unfounded prejudices under which they have labored, we trust without any fault of their own. Our efforts are openly directed to these objects. We do not calumniate our brethren; we do not nickname God's creatures; we do not sow discord in the Union.



Wonder not if the world hate you . . .

A FOURTH OF JULY editorial, appearing July 1, 1831, in *The Southern Religious Telegraph* of Richmond, Virginia, inspired a series of letters in the *United States Catholic Miscellaney* to the "Candid and Un-prejudiced American People." Briefly, the editorial declared the republic to be in danger because of the presence and freedom of Roman Catholics.

As far as lay within the power of his physical strength, his mind, and his pen, the Bishop of Charleston — in some respects the shepherd of the whole United States flock — fearlessly met the challenge of the great ground swell of Evangelical press and pulpit verbiage whose surging momentum had increased perceptibly during the 1820's.

In 1827 the Church in America joined the universal celebration of the papal jubilee of Leo XII. In 1829 the First Provincial Council of the Church in America met at Baltimore. No prelate had been more insistent that such a Council was woefully needed than the Bishop of Charleston. This event did not in the slightest degree allay the nativistic fears which were kept green and flourishing by the Evangelicals. In fact resentment reached new heat when, from the deliberations of this first council, came forth thirty-eight decrees, among them a warning to Catholics of "corrupt translations of the Bible"; the proposition that parochial schools for Catholic children would insure a correct knowledge of history; and that when there was a prospect that he would be reared in the faith, a non-Catholic child should not be denied the graces of baptism.

The Baltimore Council inevitably demonstrated to all religionists the strength of ecclesiastical authority. While the Evangelicals may have secretly envied this asset, many beyond the pews of the Church did not understand its implications nor its limitations: therefore the "power and strength of the Catholic Church" was feared anew. And as has ever been the history of the Church since the deflection of Judas Iscariot, these fears were given impetus by Catholics, themselves, who by schism or outright apostasy rebelled against this authority. Specifically at this period were the scandals of schism in Pennsylvania and Charleston; and the enemies of the Church hugged to their righteous bosoms the letters of the apostate Spanish priest, Blanco White, published in 1825 and widely distributed by the enterprising British press. Today the same type of enemy gives profitable support to a publication owned and edited by a group of modern apostate priests, who by clever circulation devices aim to get subscriptions from Roman Catholics who with courage and conviction remain loyal to the Church in obedience to the will of God.

In the 1820's, as one might say, things were always stirring in the Catholic camp and the Evangelicals, as might also be expected, were loud in abusive denunciation. This was purely a mechanism of self-defense for the Evangelicals held, in common with the Catholics, that it was unreasonable, illogical, and impossible for "one religion to be as good as another." The effect of abusive denunciation, however, contrary to what is intended, is not seldom beneficial publicity for the object denounced. Exactly, precisely, and specifically the Evangelicals actually knew not what they feared or, knowing, they did not clearly identify and logically sustain it. Opportunity was theirs in abundance through the columns of the *United States Catholic Miscellaney*. Their abuse indicated their familiarity with this publication; but strangely, from its expository articles they did not seem to gather correct information: despite the clarity and lucid character of John England's pen the unimaginative opposition resorted again and again to the same three-hundred-year-old generalizations and charges which John England rendered, finally, the earmarks of an ignorant man.

On January 2, 1830, the New York Protestant Association was formed, at once giving birth to a weekly mouthpiece *The Protestant* (ancestor of the present publication of this name?), which by 1833 had had a succession of editors and a fluctuation of policies; and in this year reverted to a monthly, *The Protestant Magazine*. The editor, James Irvine, rewrote the publication's policy thus:

Deeply convinced of the dangerous tendency of this anti-Christian system; of its soul-corrupting, soul-destroying influence; dreading the danger to which our country, if indifferent to its increase in political influence, is exposed; and influenced by a love of country, and by an ardent desire to promote the interests of immortal souls, we have entered upon this work, resolved as far as in us lies, to defend the great truths of the gospel opposed by popery, and to exhibit those doctrines

and practices of Roman Catholics which are contrary to the interests of mankind.

This conservative purpose was such only in contrast to that of *The Protestant's* first editor who had proposed to induce the American people "to look the monster in the face, and observe his hideous features (so that) they would turn from it with horror and disgust." Such was the ambition of the Reverend George Bourne, advocate of sensationalism. He stated no reconciliation with Rome was possible and that the most quickly effective attack would be aggressive denunciation stressing the then threadbare theme of moral corruption.

For the most part, as John England observed to the "Candid and Un-prejudiced American People," such a policy was doomed to miss its mark. Many Protestants, conscientiously reared in hatred of the Church, now seriously questioned whether a constant stress upon immorality did not serve to increase its growth and influence: would it not serve the Protestant cause better, more swiftly and more effectively, to let the "beast" expire by totally ignoring it? Did not the flood tide of sensational abuse only serve to keep the "Romish Church," her defenders, and her claims, ever before a public, some small minority of which, it was reluctantly admitted, indulged a tendency (very natural) to compare and contrast? This inclination was developing a small "leakage" from Protestantism to Catholicism. The Evangelicals, especially, were worried. If discussion there must be, urged moderate Protestants — and nominal Protestants — would it not contribute better toward the desired objective to keep it in the more intellectual realm of polemics? The intelligent and honest Protestant had come to admit with more surprise than reluctance, that there were sound arguments to support Catholic claims. They called attention to the living evidence which refuted much of the abuse directed to Catholics personally.

But to the undisciplined mind, which is prone to assume the proportions of a majority in a population, sensationalism was then, as now, far more appealing than profound and sober truths. So, while the Bishop of Charleston labored to assuage vague fears launched by the Evangelical pulpiteers and penmen, there reappeared, not without the benefit of adroit promotion, such sensational and popular earlier works as Gavin's *Master Key to Popery* first published in England in 1773, republished here during the American Revolution and the War of 1812 when Catholics were voluntarily "wading through the blood" of battle to preserve the republic. Another popular item bore the alluring title, *Female Convents: Secrets of Nunneries Disclosed*, first published in England in 1829, again in New York in 1834. Equally lurid was *Jesuit Juggling: Forty Popish Frauds Detected and Disclosed*, reprinted in New York in 1835 from the English edition, one of the oldest in the long chain of works inspired by British determination to keep the "Established Church" established. Though incomplete, this list must include the still popular work, a "literary" sensation of 1836, the *Awful Disclosures of the Hotel Dieu Nunnery of Montreal*, whose author, Maria Monk, an unfortunate, unhappy woman given to drink and drugs, later denied the veracity of every word in the book and died insane. Of this last atrocity, British fingers are clean. But there is still available in 1948 a fortune to the author who will vilify the Catholic Church; the theme of moral corruption will still pay royalties.

As John England noted the progress of Catholicism in America, which since the Revolution he said had been "in the ratio of the efforts to extinguish it or impede its progress," one irately and bitterly abusive editor retaliated by renaming him John Dagger England. This must have brought a spontaneous grin to his lips, ever ready for a smile. He boldly illustrated

the fact which roused such resentment among the Evangelicals, that slowly old prejudices, bigotry, and injustice were fading before the intelligence, the common sense, and the inherent honor of many non-Catholics. He generously gave credit where credit was due, though not by design and forethought — to that intemperate segment of Evangelicals who claimed to represent the “elect,” the “more sanctified,” the “perfect” among the American citizenry. This faction railed against England’s statement of the obvious, that is that “Catholics, as they have become better known, are more esteemed by their fellow citizens.” So far as the apostolate of one lonely Catholic pen could bring this about, John England’s was responsible for this change in public opinion.

But he did not crush the Evangelical crusade. Had the growth and progress he mentioned been of one of the sects, the Evangelicals would not have resented it, though naturally they might have been jealous. Their resentment, however, was not born of “competition” or “holy rivalry” even though one hundred years ago each sect was more convinced and more certain of what it believed and why than it is today; rather, it came of the seed which gave every sect its initial impetus — protest against the Roman Catholic Church. This is the basic meaning of the title “Protestant” and will be ever so defended by the convinced Protestant who had it thrust upon him in 1529 when a Lutheran prince signed a protest against an edict of the Diet of Spires which he claimed was “intended to crush the Reformation.” Since that time the title has been proudly borne by all dissenters from the authority of Rome except the self-called “Anglo-Catholics” who, despite the logical and illuminating deductions of one formerly of their communion, John Cardinal Newman, still persist in a mistaken interpretation of the “branch theory.”

The magnetic influence of John England determined the

Evangelicals upon a course "of extermination against infidels and Roman Catholics" much as their missionaries today would bring "Christianity" to the South Americans. For the benefit of the "Candid and Un-prejudiced American People" Bishop England, meeting fire with fire, noted mildly that "in many sections Protestants are slowly coming to the conclusion that their Catholic neighbors, as a class, are as representative of Christian principles as are their critics." Never one to drop a bomb without considerably removing the fuse, he enlarged to point out that the Church had prospered under "the calm, steady, persevering industry of Pennsylvania," which, as a colony, due to the benign influence of the Society of Friends, was the only one wherein Catholics had not been persecuted — the overrated and overpraised enterprise of Roger Williams not excepted. The Church had been an object of "keen observation and jealous scrutiny," he noted, and she had grown despite the "adverse, obstinate and determined investigation of New York," where then and now the usurper, Jacob Leisler, when his identity is recalled at all, is hailed by some as a noble Protestant martyr.

In New England where John Cotton had declaimed that toleration alone made the world anti-Christian; where the hilarious game, if Puritans could abandon themselves to hilarity, was the fireside pastime, "Break the Pope's Neck," there was also a change. In the mid-twenties Bishop England could observe that New England was overcoming her prejudices "deep-rooted and unbending" though they were. He ventured the prophecy that in another fifty years New England, "land of steady habits, will be the land in which the Catholic Church will extensively flourish." By the ratio of prejudice this prophecy was aided to realization, though slightly beyond the time limit set, by the burning of the Ursuline convent at Charlestown, Massachusetts, the fire being set by a

mob of low intelligence roused to act by anti-Catholic pulpiteers who raged that student patronage at the school conducted by the Ursulines was predominantly Protestant. This indication of the ineffectiveness of their ministry naturally could not be taken in silence. Leader among such pulpiteers was Lyman Beecher whose heated sermons against Catholicism earned for his Park Street, Boston, church the title "Brimstone Corner."

Concluding his observations, and one might say prophetically refraining from further prophecy, the Bishop noted of his own locale, "Though the aristocratic Episcopal Church in the South would scarcely vouchsafe an examination of our creed, it is most jealous and lynx-eyed as to the effect of our doctrine upon society."

But the spur and help of the turbulent forties had yet to come, and despite his weariless efforts John England could not alone stem the rising tide of Evangelical distrust and resentment which would break over the land as he was laid in his grave.

When American children were taught American history one hundred years ago, they heard less of the slogan "no taxation without representation" and much more of the "vicious" Quebec Act than they do today. Modern historians admit this act of "toleration" to be the igniting spark of the War for Independence, for in 1774 the Quebec Act extended toleration to Catholics in Quebec (while most inconsistently withholding it from the Catholics in the American colonies). Included under the protection of the act were the French settlers in the Ohio valley. This was too much. Although it had originated in the English Parliament, not exactly a stronghold of Catholicism, nevertheless, it was charged that the act was at the dictation of Rome for the purpose of establishing an iron ring of "popery" about the English colonies.

If Gallic Papists have a right
To worship their own way,
Then farewell to the Liberties
Of poor America.

The enactment of this measure bloated the wave of animosity against Catholicism until it spilled forth, foaming over New England and creeping as far as the Church of England in the South, where in the year of its enactment the City of Gentlemen witnessed the burning of an effigy of the pope in a bonfire of English tea.

Meanwhile, since 1750, and for a hundred years therefrom, the Paul Dudley lectures were given at Harvard University. Abandoned for a time, they were reinstated in 1888. Their purpose was to expose the "idolatry of the Romish Church: its tyranny, usurpations, damnable heresies, fatal errors, abominable superstitions, and other crying wickedness in her high places."

It must ever appear a paradox to the Catholic that those who rely upon the Bible as their sole "rule of faith" can place so much confidence on it for the salvation of their very souls. Because it is history that it was the Catholic Church that in the third century assembled those inspired spiritual writings which, as she collected them, are known as the Bible — "the Book." What did Christians do for a "rule of faith" in the days of persecution before Holy Church gave the entire world the Bible? And since the Bible originated with this Church "of damnable heresies and fatal errors," how can those who protest against her put any faith in it at all?

For the Catholic who knows anything of this nation's history another great paradox nests in the era of the American Revolution. The white flame of animosity soared high in 1774, but in 1778 subsided to a mere dull glow when Catholic France came to the aid of the desperate colonies. Only the Tories

fanned the embers then and for obvious reasons. But how sincere may be a conviction which is temporarily abandoned in the face of the alternatives of tyrannical oppression or physical death? This flexibility is a tenet of the doctrine of communism.

Such paradoxes may bring one to forgive but not excuse the Evangelical editor of Richmond who in his July Fourth editorial of 1831 complained vehemently that the republic lay in grave danger because many Americans seemed to have more sympathy for the Roman Catholics than for "enlightened Christians"; that their efforts were regarded with more complacency than the efforts of Protestant sects. The "subjects of the Beast," protested this editor, were "drunkards, profane swearers, Sabbath breakers, gamblers and votaries of dissipation whose example is pernicious to the community." If this Evangelical sincerely believed these charges upon irrefutable evidence, then his dissertation, "The Republic in Danger," was a crystal-clear patriotic duty. But did he so believe — that is, sincerely?

For about this editorial there is a significant note. Theological disputation is not even attempted: it is sensational, but it gives no proofs to strengthen its sensation, and without such it distinctly "bears false witness against thy neighbor." If he truly was convinced that that neighbor must be exterminated for the good of the republic, was this the proper way to conduct his campaign? Is such an emetic ever of lasting effect?

It is more likely the fact that *The Southern Religious Telegraph* recognized in the Christopher in Carolina a formidable obstacle to the vilification and elimination of Roman Catholicism within the republic. This Christopher excused the ignorance of the opposition and pitied its prejudice; but for its malice he had neither patience nor charity, rather condem-

nation. Attack never found him unprepared as his attackers were coming more and more to realize. The Evangelical editor did not find him unprepared — nor was he in any event prepared for John England's retort which followed historical lines thoroughly familiar to the people of the republic.

Did we desert our brethren of other creeds in the day of invasion? Did we conspire against their domestic peace, and following our own notion of Scripture, whisper aught that might overwhelm us in unforeseen ruin? Was our blood or our treasure withheld in any day of peril? Is the charter of your liberties perfect without our name? Did we preach against the acts of your Congress in the midst of conflict with enemies of the land? Did we ever express a reluctance to act against a Catholic foe as quickly as we would against a Protestant foe?

What then in the name of heaven is the cause of the continual allusions to the danger of the Republic from our body?

His final question gave the adversary an opportunity to "come clean," but the adversary, as such adversaries usually do, received it with aloof and silent dignity, content with having struck the first blow.

The republic is always in danger, John England pointed out, and always would be, but not because of the freedom permitted to Roman Catholics to worship as they wished, but because while repeating the timeworn calumnies and threadbare vilifications of this Church, the real enemies of the republic could proceed in their subversive efforts without recognition. There were and always would be, said he, those who would undermine the political foundations and constitutional foundation of the republic for the selfish end of tyranny and oppression, working swiftly behind the noise of religious contention, a noise of deafening volume if the Roman Catholic Church is attacked. Events of the past century have amply justified his words.

Evangelicals had another objective aside from their presumed patriotic and moral obligation to crush the Catholic

Church. To accomplish this they must intrude upon the personal liberties and private lives of every individual just as the advocates of "planned parenthood" do today. The Evangelicals would abolish "ardent spirits" from the land.

That Catholics in general and Bishop England in particular did not lend active support to the prohibition movement was exhibited as evidence of their moral degradation. It is often difficult to understand that one of the objectives of Catholic teaching is self-discipline; to realize that Catholic doctrine is the strongest defender of that great gift of the Creator, namely, the gift of free will, and that only by the proper exercise of this free will is the creature able to perfect and sanctify himself as his Creator would have him do. God has never coerced man; why, then, should man coerce man? If man himself is not, of his free will, able to control his appetites, how is it possible that man-made civil legislation can do so? No legislation can make one man love another; no legislation can prohibit the raising, roasting, and drinking of breakfast coffee, nor abolish the dunking of doughnuts therein: how can a law regulate what a man drinks or how many children he may have? John England explained that while the objectives of temperance societies in themselves might produce a partial good they might also tend to promote more evil than good "in the hypocrisy of some and the pride of others." One has only to take up residence in a "dry" state or county in the United States to realize the truth of these words if his memory does not reach back to the debacle of national prohibition a quarter of a century ago.

In 1839 the instance of one isolated effort to bring about prohibition brought Bishop England to the fore again, giving him a unique opportunity through the columns of the *Charleston News and Courier* to explain a variety of Catholic doctrines and beliefs to those of the City of Gentlemen who did

not subscribe to the *United States Catholic Miscellaney*. In fact, so extensive did this correspondence become in order to satisfy the limitless misconceptions of his opponent, that after his eleventh letter the *News and Courier* refused all subsequent epistles unless paid for at their usual rates of advertising.

In still another way this controversy is unique: it reached Rome in an Italian translation by Rome's request, where, after it had been thoroughly examined, astonishment was expressed that in an age termed "enlightened" by those protesting against the ancient faith, any respectable scholar would give credence to the forgeries of Pinet and his imitators. A French translation was also distributed from Paris, it must be recorded to the acclaim of Bishop England of Charleston, South Carolina, and the discredit of the Reverend Richard Fuller, Baptist pastor of Beaufort, South Carolina. Today, this controversy is perhaps more frequently recalled, certainly in Charleston at least, than any other upon which the Bishop entered. And this is how what is called the "Fuller Controversy" came about.

The Temperance Society of Prince William's Parish addressed to the Legislature of South Carolina a memorial against the license and sale of intoxicating beverages. The memorial was authored by the Reverend Mr. Fuller. In the course of his arguments he switched from the undeniable evils which can result from the abuse of "ardent spirits" to the Roman chancery, in this manner:

But at least the motives of your petitioners will be respected, nor will the virtue and piety of her children let die the principles on which they address you — until the time shall come when the legislators of a Christian community will regard an enactment to license the retail of ardent spirits with the same abhorrence which they feel toward the statute formerly passed by the Roman Chancery making assassination and murder, and prostitution, and every crime, subjects of license and taxation, and regulating the price at which each might be committed.

John England objected to this false and wholly unrelated reference, and suggested that in retaining this paragraph in the memorial, “. . . it is not very respectful to the Legislature, itself, to insinuate that it may be compared to so execrable a tribunal as that which you describe.”

In reply the Reverend Mr. Fuller urged that considering his position and influence it would be better for Bishop England to “. . . unite your great influence and abilities with the efforts of pious men for the suppressing of an injurious evil in the land and not divert the public mind from the humane enterprise contemplated in the memorial by zealous, but vain, attempts to deny what all history confirms, or palliate what all reason and religion must forever condemn.”

Well, if diversion was done the Reverend Mr. Fuller was the author of the act, and as it transpired there was far more public interest in the matter of his diversion than in the objective of his memorial.

John England lost no time in disabusing his opponent of “what all history confirms” by demonstrating once again the falsity of “history.” But subsequent replies from the Reverend Mr. Fuller, as so often happens in verbal controversies as well, wandered far afield from the original statement relative to the Roman chancery’s “former” collection of taxes for sins and crimes of every description. The Reverend Mr. Fuller, if not before, was now aware that he faced a tenacious scholar and sought again the device of diversion to lessen the weight of evidence against the history upon which he relied. So, quite inadvertently, he wandered disastrously among innumerable pitfalls dug by false history and idle rumor. Among these were indulgences, perjury, the Bible, intolerance, the Third Lateran Council, persecution, John Huss, the Irish question, and what he described as Bishop England’s own delusions — all originating in his effort to abolish “ardent spirits” from the

state of South Carolina! Perhaps the Reverend Richard Fuller felt this torrent of "what all history confirms" would swamp whatever defenses John England might bring forth. But he underestimated the patience and endurance of the Bishop of Charleston which serves to explain the length to which the correspondence necessarily extended. For if John, Bishop of Charleston, could not thoroughly and completely vindicate his Church and his faith in his own diocese, of what use was he to his flock and to Christ, his Master?

Early in this rapid topic-hopping encounter, Bishop England put forth a restraining hand: after explaining the disputed tax book of the Roman chancery he says, "This, sir, will show you why I confine you to Chancery, and do not leave you at liberty to run about, as you please, from tribunal to tribunal through the entire court, in which you may find a dozen or two of other dodging places. You brought me into Chancery and I shall take good care to keep you there."

"Can you deny the existence of the tax book?" demanded the Reverend Mr. Fuller, incredulity italicizing his words.

Now, sir, I not only do not dispute the authenticity of the Tax-book of the Roman Chancery, but I admit it—and I could not do otherwise without crime, for I have seen it, and I have now lying on my table a volume regulating the practice of that tribunal. But I do deny that the statute of which you wrote in the memorial, was ever enacted; and I deny that any authentic copy of the Tax-book ever contained one of those items at which you have been so justly shocked, and which you so justly condemn.

That you have not a copy either of the statute or the Tax-book, I believe. If you had, you ought to have produced it, and only two questions could have arisen, viz.: "Is the copy correct?" "Does it sustain the charge?" This, sir, would be primary evidence, and conclusive.

Unshaken in his reliance upon "what all history confirms," the Reverend Mr. Fuller brought forth nine historical witnesses for his case: nine historians who had been dust for two centuries, but whose forgeries were not even moldy.

It was natural if not inevitable that early in the correspondence Bishop England would have to explain the nature and purpose of the disputed tax book. Necessarily delayed by pressure of other duties, he inserted in the *News and Courier* a brief note to that effect. He advised the Reverend Mr. Fuller, "I have several other and indispensable duties to which I must attend. I must, therefore, request a day's indulgence, and, for which, of course, I should dread to offer you even the fee of the Tax-book, as I would not desire to shock or insult you."

Did the Baptist pastor of Beaufort have the grace to smile over this quip?

The following day, August 19, John England set about the promised explanation. Obviously it would require more space and time to define the tax book of the Roman chancery than it took Mr. Fuller, in the memorial, to assert its existence and vile character.

"The Court of Rome has always had its business divided amongst several tribunals," began John England lucidly and patiently. "No other court in existence is more jealous and strict in keeping each within its proper sphere." The chancellor was a notary, his duty, ". . . to examine and correct certain public deeds, and to judge some classes of small cases regarding titles."

The court had been remodeled to the status it enjoyed in 1839 by Pope Nicholas V three hundred and eighty-nine years previously. The cases brought before it then included temporal matters relative to vacant sees, matters regarding benefices; absolution from canonical censures such as excommunication, interdict, and suspension, "but not from sins nor from penance"; dispensations from the Canon Law impediments to marriage; the revision of documents for the perfection of style, the supply of omissions, and the proper engrossment.

"The officers of this tribunal are entitled to certain fees for their labors," the Bishop continues, "and they may retain a document until the fee is paid." There were frequent occasions, he enlarged, when these fees were excessive and oppressive. To abolish such abuse ". . . a tax-book of fees was therefore regulated by authority, and any officer demanding or receiving a larger fee than that specified in the Tax-book incurred censures himself and was fined heavily."

It was the design and purpose of the authority publishing this tax book that all might know the court's charges for specified services. Concluding his exposition the Bishop informed the Reverend Mr. Fuller that the particular tribunal under discussion has ". . . nothing to do with sins, either by granting a license, or by giving absolution, or by remitting a penance — and therefore it would be folly to look in the Tax-book of the Roman Chancery for the prices of sin. How then came they to be inserted in the book? I answer by interpolation, by forgery. . . ."

He then reminds the Baptist pastor that had such forgeries been at the disposal of Luther he would not have been reluctant to use them. The original tax book was published about 1450; the first forgery in 1564. In the fifty years following Luther's break in 1517, Bishop England calls to the judgment of the Reverend Mr. Fuller:

. . . the most furious declamation was made against Rome upon the subject of her sale of pardons, indulgences and licenses — and during this period we are told that there were publically printed and sold at least six editions of this Tax-book, containing the tariff you charge upon the Roman Chancery; and yet, during that entire half century, not one preacher, not one reformer, not one enemy of Rome, not one friend to virtue that we can discover alluded directly or indirectly to this damning evidence, which would have at once covered the Roman Chancery with shame, and given such a triumph to the enemies of the Holy See. . . . Is it in human nature, that Luther should have burned the bull of Leo X, and spared his tariff of licenses if such a tariff existed?

That he should tell the Pope that he was so full of devils that he spat them from his mouth, blew them from his nose, sent them forth by every mode of discharge, and yet not fling at him his book of taxes?

He offers, too, that John Calvin, "not less industrious nor less competent than Luther," never directly or indirectly referred to "this formidable Tax-book." Of the nine editions of the tax book which Mr. Fuller had marshaled to witness to the truth of his allegations, Bishop England pointed out that six were available during the fifty years immediately following the Protestant revolt: ". . . the Tax-book, which was well known," he asserts, "contained no such items as those which shocked you, and the forgery had not yet been committed. Neither Mosheim, nor any other respectable historian of the period alludes to such a document. The original forgery by Pinet appeared in 1564."

So, as per these highlighted excerpts from a prodigious correspondence, Bishop England disposed of the tax rates for sins, especially murder and prostitution; but the Reverend Mr. Fuller, while gathering the forces of his contrary evidence, had tossed many other irons into the fire which John England had to withdraw and cool by the breath of truth. Proceeding, he writes, ". . . there are other tribunals beside those of the Penitentiary and the Chancery, and they (indulgences) belong to one of these others. You cannot forget that I told you of a dozen or two dodging places; I acknowledge that I am shut out of the Penitentiary, but you have not got me into the Chancery, because I have got the other dodging places open to me."

Bishop England never doubted that the Reverend Mr. Fuller's fear of Catholicism was sincere. It requires no great perception to realize, from his own words, that the Baptist minister was blindly led by erroneous history. One could not expect the Reverend Mr. Fuller to drop all his fears and

errors as a snake drops its skin, merely upon the written word of one member of the Church he so feared. To the Reverend Mr. Fuller, and to many others, the charge of false history is understood wholly as an evasion of unpleasant truths. With these the integrity of history is inviolate, that is the history of their choice, not that recommended by another for purposes of comparative research.

In a letter summarizing the "Fuller Controversy," Bishop England writes that the Reverend Mr. Fuller was

. . . misled by a host of writers who copied one of the earliest falsehoods that was invented to vilify our Church and to justify the secession of those who called themselves "Reformers." I am convinced [he] was honestly under the impression that the Protestant imitations of the Tax-book of Roman tribunals were exact and authentic copies of these books. . . . I have no doubt he was convinced his authorities were good, and that his case was easily established. . . .

But the final communication of the Reverend Mr. Fuller must have at once astonished and saddened John England after his long and tedious attempt to set the gentleman straight. This letter demonstrated that he had utterly failed in his purpose:

Sir, believe me when I tell you that I say these things in sorrow. God is my witness that my tears are on the paper while I write. Forgive me, Sir, you must forgive me; but when I think of the souls whose everlasting destinies depend on you I am unable to repress my feelings. . . . tomorrow, perhaps, you and I may stand at the foot of the august Tribunal. In view of that judgment seat, and as you would face the Judge in peace, I implore you Reverend Sir, cease from doctrines which the word of God condemns; abandon a claim to infallibility which will involve you forever in attempts to defend error, and which Jehovah frowns upon as impious usurpation. Leave the councils and take for yourself, and give to your flock, that Book which alone can guide man with unerring wisdom and which, while it denounces as blasphemy all human pretensions to forgive sins, leads us to the fountain open for sin, and lifts on high that cross before whose majesty pursuing justice stops in reverence, cowering, and under whose shelter the guiltiest thing finds pardon and peace here and immortal glory beyond the tomb.

Did John England find this plea a tragedy too great for tears?

.. 8 ..

. . . my kindest friends, my most intimate acquaintances, they whom I do and ought to esteem and respect, are at variance with my creed; yet it does not and shall not destroy our affections. In me it would be ingratitude; for I must avow, and I do it most willingly, that in my journeys through our states I have been frequently humbled and abashed at the kindness with which I have been treated.

I came amongst you a stranger, and I went through your land with many and most serious and unfortunate mistakes, for which you were not blameable, operating to my disadvantage. If a Roman Catholic bishop were, in truth, what he is even now generally supposed to be in various parts of this Union, he should not be permitted to reside amongst you; yet I was received into your homes, enrolled in your families and profited by your kindness. I have frequently put the question to myself, whether, if I had similar impressions regarding you, I could have acted with like kindness; and I must own, I frequently doubted that I would.

It is true you labored under serious mistakes as to what was my religion, and what were my duties and obligations. But you were not yourselves the authors of those mistakes; nor had you within your reach the means of correcting them. I feel grateful to my friends who have afforded me this opportunity of perhaps aiding to do away with those impressions; for our affections will be more strong as those mistakes will be corrected; and it must gratify those, who, loving the country, behold us spread through it, to be assured that we are not those vile beings that have been painted to their imaginations,

and which ought not to be allowed existence in any civilized community.

. . . if the Roman Catholic Church were, in her doctrines and practices, what (my friends in this country) have been taught she is, I would not be a Roman Catholic.

John, Bishop of Charleston, to the Congress of the United States, in Washington, Sunday, January 8, 1826



. . . see where the principles of true republicanism are first to be found.

JEALOUS of its unique experiment in representative government the young republic suffered a chronic, debilitating fever of nativistic emotion which reached a critical stage in the Know-Nothing era, the turbulent '40's. Prior to this acute crisis, however, it had frequently erupted as two running sores over the body politic, whose discharge gave off the strong and putrid odor of ignorance.

During the course of weighty deliberations with Thomas Jefferson, John Adams often pondered whether ". . . a free government [can] possibly exist with the Roman Catholic religion?" Jefferson's reply is not recorded, but the fact that he hastened to "rescue" his daughter from a French convent school when she advised him she wished to embrace Catholicism and become a nun may be enlightening. The populace itself, obviously deeply concerned by its fear of the unknown, developed a second irritation. In strident voice it cried: "Can a Roman Catholic be a loyal American citizen?"

For one hundred and seventy-five years a free government has existed with the Roman Catholic religion in its midst. For one hundred and seventy-five years Roman Catholics, in numbers exceeding their percentage of the general popula-

tion, have risen to the defense of this free government in no less than seven wars. Jefferson and Adams could shake their heads over the "riddle": both were aware that the American navy was founded and brought to fruition by a Roman Catholic; that a Roman Catholic freely gave half of his lands for the creation of the city of Washington, D. C.; that another, when the bitterness of Valley Forge might so easily have turned into the utter defeat of the cause of independence, sent to General Washington freshly equipped and clothed troops, food for those suffering there with him, and, more, from his own pocket enough money to pay those suffering troops while Congress haggled over the appropriation of funds for that purpose. Jefferson and Adams had within their own recollections many examples of the loyalty of Roman Catholics to the free government and their sterling citizenship. Since their day history has recorded a multitude of such instances, yet now when advocates of a foreign ideology whisper in polite pink circles or shout over the air waves these same old "riddles" the old sores erupt again on the national body; again the "false alarm" is sounded and again ignorance cries for "relief" by extermination.

It did not take the Bishop of Charleston long to discover these unhealthy breaks in the skin of national unity, and he proceeded to defend the constitutional institutions of the young republic as valiantly as he defended his faith. He early discovered that Catholics were set apart as beings morally degraded because of their religion. He found the press of the country co-operating in this attitude by frequent publication of items offensive to Catholics and their faith. His unwearied and necessarily repetitious defense of his faith demonstrated the patience of the healer. This patience was sustained beyond ordinary measure because he could never forget that American knowledge and American education had been

stunted by the enforced "censorship" of the mother country, England.

"It struck me that as this had been an English colony and as many of the gentlemen whom I met had been educated in England or under English teachers they had learned also some of the English fabrications," he explained. "I took an opportunity of asking a friend of this description to inform me in sincerity whether he thought a good Roman Catholic could be a good citizen. After such a request and such an explanation as made him feel at liberty, he very candidly told me that he did not."

Closely following upon this interview, the "Female Episcopal Bible, Prayer-book and Tract Society" of Charleston circulated *A Protestant Catechism* which, among other charges, strongly insisted that Roman Catholicism and American citizenship were wholly incompatible. John England addressed thirteen open and expository letters to the Right Reverend Dr. Bowen, bishop of the Protestant Episcopal Church of South Carolina, appealing with success to his sense of "decency and fair-play."

"I have read some of the most blasphemous publications of all sorts of unbelievers," he told Dr. Bowen, "but I do not recollect to ever have found more objectionable matter in so small a compass as in the sixteen pages of this Protestant Catechism."

Dr. Bowen proved himself a gentleman of good faith, intelligence, and high principles. He acknowledged the injustice of the catechism and recalled it, agreeing, as Bishop England had shown, that it contained ". . . several untruths, and a multitude of libelous charges upon innocent persons, together with the most opprobrious, injurious and uncharitable expressions, illiberal in their own nature and contumeliously insulting to a large portion of your fellow-citizens. . . ."

John England used these two words so often in his writings that they stand forth on page after page, almost constituting a technical flaw in his otherwise masterful style. Contrary to the norms of good literature, with deliberate intent it seems, he continuously labored the obvious fact that Roman Catholics could be and were also American *citizens*. He would impress public opinion with the inescapable fact that the Constitution of the United States offered citizenship to Roman Catholics, which entitled them to all the rights and prerogatives of that privileged state.

In the fall of 1821, while on his return to Charleston from his first and informative tour of the eastern seaboard which had extended as far as New York, the Bishop of Charleston, while in Washington, called on President Monroe and his secretary of state, John Quincy Adams, who, like his father, was dourly suspicious of Catholics and Catholicism. Any possible doubt on this point had been totally eliminated on the previous Fourth of July when, in Washington, the secretary of state had given a patriotic address replete with anti-Catholic darts. The second Adams, who would yet become the sixth president of the United States, never forsook his position but remained firmly rooted in the deep footsteps of his father, and now survives in memory as the epitome of the American colonial attitude toward Catholicism.

Undoubtedly, when the Bishop of Charleston courteously called on Mr. Adams in October of 1821 he did not then and there answer his host's Fourth of July assault, but instead silently prayed that God would give him an opportunity to do so as publicly as the attack had been advanced. The theme of the offensive address, peppered with adroit and well-worn political objections, had been that old wives' cancer, still active on expedient occasions: Church and State. John Quincy Adams had contrasted freedom of religion and American

democracy with “. . . that pretentious system of despotism and superstition which, in the name of the meek and humble Jesus, has been spread over the Christian world.”

John England had to wait years for an answer to his prayer, but at the end of 1825 he was again in Washington, and on Christmas Day preached in St. Patrick's Church. Here was his opportunity, within the “camp of the enemy,” and he boldly offered rebuttal to John Quincy Adams' 1821 July Fourth address. Despite his prowess and the ever present aid of the Holy Ghost, the occasion could not have been free of inner tension for him, because on that day John England gave the retort courteous, not to the secretary of state, but to the president of the United States.

What followed could not have surprised him more than it must have gratified and thrilled the Catholics of the United States, for only fourteen days later, on Sunday, January 8, 1826, he was invited to preach before the Congress of the United States. Such an invitation was frequently extended to outstanding clergymen, but never before had a Roman Catholic prelate been so honored. He was asked to confine his remarks specifically to religion.

Since his religion was generally feared and despised by the majority who listened to him as well as by that larger majority of Americans whom they represented; since the Bishop of Charleston, himself, represented a minority religious group in the republic, and since there was a strong, outspoken sentiment in press and pulpit to rid the nation of his faith, a sentiment moreover wholly congenial to the president of the United States, John England did not step to the speaker's rostrum of the House of Representatives that Sunday morning without that butterfly flutter in his breast so well known to many persons who habitually face an audience. He describes these feelings informally in a letter, at once elated

and amused, dated three weeks after the event and addressed to Judge Gaston in North Carolina. The thrill of the occasion was still upon him as he wrote:

Without seeking for the occasion, or feeling myself upon the topics until I had gone too far to recede, & then, & only then, my eyes rested upon Mr. Adams. I on Christmas day met foot to foot the 4th of July oration in which he so unkindly assailed us four years since. I then as coolly & as firmly as I could did my utmost. . . . The next Wednesday I was at his levee, where I was received in a very flattering manner, & upon arrival at home found a card for dinner on the succeeding Saturday. We had much conversation upon several topics, & a little about yourself, in which he appeared to think it news that you were a Popish church warden.

On the day I filled the Speaker's chair I was indeed a show, & all Washington must have thought so, for the throng was so great that the President found it very difficult to get in, & when in, much more so to get a seat . . . for once I must own I felt ashamed at hearing my own name proclaimed by my friends Haynes & Hamilton of S.C., who formed my bodyguard, whilst in all the pomp of Prelacy I struggled through and heard the proclamation renewed still to make way for me to enter. If I could blush, I am convinced I then did, because I had some unusual sensation of heart, and some unwonted glow in my cheek and on my forehead. When I was done I certainly felt a very extraordinary gratification at the intense attention with which I was heard, & that every face seemed to say "go on". But I thought two hours enough for them & for me, — I made the Sign of the Cross, & my gratification was indeed increased by the vast & respectable portion of the assembly that exhibited its Faith. You will, perhaps, smile at my saying that even elevated as I was, I could not forget that I was once an insignificant being, & I vouchsafed to come down from my seat to recognize the President of the United States & converse a little with him.

Do not think me vain or childish in this; I know you would wish to learn, even if you did not care for the individual, what was the first appearance of a Catholic clergyman before the legislature of the union & I could not write thus to another.

He had been "instructed" to speak on religion and on religion he spoke, as he says, for two hours, admitting in his opening remarks ". . . some embarrassment, for I look upon the situation in which I stand, to be one of extreme delicacy."

Even so, no awkward hesitation retarded the swift pace of his continuity; no fear, no compromise, no expedient phrase marred the flow of his reasoned arguments and vivid illustrations first, in support of the dependence of Catholic doctrine upon revelation; second, in the demonstration that such revelation was not available in printed form during Catholicism's early centuries because the Church, left as guardian by Christ of the deposit of faith, had not yet assembled and given the inspired Word of God to the world between the covers of the Bible; third, in exhibiting the uncontradictory character of divine truth as it is taught by Catholic doctrine. He showed that mystery was no obstacle to faith, pointing to the fact that though the mysteries of nature were beyond the reason of man, man neither denied them nor failed to appreciate them for that cause.

Then he turned the full power of his eloquence to the two burning questions of the day: "Can a free government possibly exist with the Roman Catholic religion?" and "Can a good Roman Catholic be a loyal American citizen?"

"I would not allow to the Pope, or to any bishop of our church outside this Union, the smallest interference with the humblest vote at our most insignificant balloting box," he told the president of the United States and Congress assembled. He insisted it would be "wisdom, prudence and safety to continue the separation" of Church and State, of spiritual and civil authority, as provided by the Constitution. He reasoned ". . . if that tribunal which is established by the Creator to testify to me what He has revealed . . . shall presume to go beyond that boundary which circumscribes its power, its acts are invalid; my rights are not to be destroyed by its usurpation; and there is no principle of my creed which prevents my using my natural rights of proper resistance to any tyrannical usurpation."

He probably paused here to scan the faces before him, bent upon determining the effectiveness of his arguments. It was important to the future of the Church in America, to the lives of those Catholics then residing here that the right answers to the questions of Catholicism-American citizenship be delivered and more important received. "You have no power to interfere with my religious rights," he told the Congress and in the same breath added, "the tribunal of the Church has no power to interfere with my civil rights."

Events yet to come would verify what he must have suspected even then, namely that his voice reached many deaf ears. "The civil tribunals of Judea were vested with sufficient authority," he reminded them, trying desperately to drive his point through the wax of fear and prejudice. Christ never transferred such authority to His apostles. "There is no class of our fellow-citizens more free to think and act for themselves on the subject of our rights than we are," he declared. "We know no tribunal in our church which can interfere in our proceedings as citizens."

In vain did he make these assertions: in vain did he demonstrate that Catholicism had lived and could live in harmony with dynasties, empires, monarchies, and republics. His statements should have settled these pressing questions coming as they did from himself, a qualified, authoritative Catholic source, the Catholic answer to anti-Catholic suppositions. But though he spoke the naked truth, though he was by learning and position thoroughly qualified to speak that truth, what he spoke was not in accordance with what a great majority of the people had been taught and therefore believed absolutely; so his words could only fall on the barren rocks of prejudice, but they were nonetheless bravely and spiritedly spoken because of this inevitable reception.

"By inquiry we shall correct many mistakes by which our

feelings have been embittered," he told the Congress in his closing remarks. But the Congress was composed of humanity, a large portion of which was conscious of no mistakes and cherished embittered feelings as a natural attribute. The pre-occupation of the majority with antagonism toward Catholicism could not embitter John England, though on occasion it could arouse strong sentiments within him. But even then he always censured the cause of the weakness rather than its many floundering victims. As long as he lived he never ceased to afford the American non-Catholic populace every opportunity to look upon their Catholic neighbors with peace and amity; and as long as he lived the greater portion of the American people scorned as false, base, impure, and immoral the opportunities his patience and charity endlessly put forth.

It was a matter of bitter resentment to many aware of the fact, that less than a month after his address to the Congress of the United States, and after a full five-year residence in this country, John England, Roman Catholic bishop of Charleston, on February 6, 1826, received in his own name a certificate of American citizenship. Fifteen years later, in John Quincy Adams' own territory, Boston, the Bishop of Charleston delivered an address on this subject which a subsequent event proved to be the final summation of his philosophy of democracy.

The merest fragments of this are preserved to us for, as was always his habit, he spoke from his mind and his heart with no previously prepared note or manuscript to prompt utterances which needed no prompting, so spontaneously did they come to his tongue; though for many such occasions he spent long hours in close study of the topics to be discussed.

The occasion of his address "On American Citizenship," Friday, May 14, 1841, was a national day of fasting and prayer called by President Tyler, "to impress all minds with

a sense of the uncertainty of human things, and of the dependence of Nations, as well as of individuals, upon our Heavenly Parent." This proclamation, published April 13, was in recognition of a national loss. One month after taking the oath of office, and that after a hotly contested presidential campaign, President Harrison had died, April 4. Bishop Benedict Fenwick, S.J., of Boston, invited his close friend John England, then in the city enroute to Europe to beg funds for his impoverished diocese, to deliver the eulogy in the Cathedral of the Holy Cross on that day.

While so occupied, John England told the children of puritanism and their Catholic neighbors that the only hope for the ultimate success of the American experiment in government lay not in torches applied to convents, not in withholding the franchise from "paupers and Catholics," not in persecution, vilification, and kindred base usages, but only and solely in the religion given to the world by Jesus Christ.

So discoursing "On American Citizenship" he spoke for two hours and a half, eloquently, brilliantly, powerfully, critically, and completely according to the Boston *Transcript*, "and intensely imbued with the pure and holy spirit of Heaven-born charity and kindness."

Later, upon request, he wrote out, on ten brief pages, what were to him the salient points of his message. After touching upon the national shock over President Harrison's sudden death which temporarily healed partisan differences and bitterness; and upon the lamented disappearance of that tolerance born of mutual suffering which had animated the founding fathers of the Union, he entered at length upon a treatment of that great national sore, Catholicism — American citizenship:

In a large portion of the civilized world, charges are prevalent against the Catholic religion as being incompatible with civil and religious

liberty. On what are these charges founded? From the pages of history it is said that the Roman Catholic religion is at war with the spirit of republicanism. But allow me to ask in what way? The principle of republicanism is the equality of man. We teach that all Christians have a common Parent, that all are equally redeemed by the blood of the Saviour, that all must appear before a common God who knows no distinction of persons. Where then is the inconsistency? Look through the records of the world, and see where the principles of true republicanism are first to be found. They had their origin in Christianity, and their earliest instance is in the church of which we are members.

Her institutions are eminently republican. Her rulers are chosen by the common consent, her officers are obliged to account strictly to those over whom they preside, her guide is a written constitution of a higher force than the will of any individual. What call you this? Aristocracy? Monarchy? It is republicanism.

He reminds his listeners that it was the republican Catholic states of Italy who "stayed the ravages of the barbarians of the North, when they devastated the south of Europe"; that prior to the Norman conquest of England, "One of her kings went to Rome, he addressed the Pope, and requested of him a code of laws for the government of his realm."

This code the pope refused. "I can give you principles, not laws," he told the king. So, John England demonstrated, the principles of English liberty derived from Roman Catholic doctrine but contemporary English historians would deny the testimony of England's treasured archives because at the moment and for two centuries past, Roman Catholicism was proscribed by king, queen, and Parliament.

The principles of the common law are Christian principles: and it was the Roman Catholic bishops of England (the only bishops of any nature at the time) who refused submission to unjust laws imposed after the Norman conquest because these laws were at variance with Christian principles — those principles given by a prior pope to a prior king of the realm. Resisting the tyranny of such laws the Catholic bishops of England wrested from a growling, hypocritical monarch the

Magna Charta, a constitution deriving from principles outlined by a pope.

So, relentlessly John England aimed his darts for the bull's-eye: the Roman Catholic Church, he insisted, was the pioneer in the republican form of government; inspired only by Christian principles, she was the inspiration of the American experiment. The obvious intimation could only be that, by habit and discipline, Roman Catholics could not only be good American citizens, but of the best, for the freedoms of republicanism were familiar and natural to them.

Even were the full script of this stirring address available to us it is questionable whether it might be fully appreciated without some awareness of at least a portion of what had transpired since the Bishop of Charleston occupied the speaker's chair in the House of Representatives fifteen years previously.

Since that occasion there had arisen the accusation that the Catholic Church in this country was "meddling in politics," an accusation which had never been laid to the Protestant Church following the appearance of any Protestant clergyman before Congress. Now was born that refrain: "We have no objection to Catholics, providing they keep out of politics."

Yet, during Bishop England's time two Catholic priests served the Congress. Reverend Gabriel Richard, S.S., represented Michigan in the lower house of the eighteenth Congress, 1823-1825; and during the twenty-second Congress, Reverend Dr. Charles Constantine Pise of Baltimore served, 1832-1834, as chaplain of the Senate. But despite these facts the energetic Evangelicals had long sought to restrict immigration and deny Catholics the constitutional right to vote. (My father, to whom this work is dedicated, in his thesis prepared for the occasion of his graduation from Chapel Hill University in 1877 advocated a restriction of Irish immigration to this country.)

Vindication, a natural motive, prompted the *United States Catholic Miscellaney* to observe that “. . . a large and powerful party has been engaged under the pretense of protecting our liberties from foreign influence to create a state of white slavery for all future Catholic immigrants,” and reported progress to this end in “. . . a petition from a little town in Massachusetts, presented by Mr. Clay to the Assembly of the United States praying against the naturalization of foreigners and the admission of Catholics. . . .”

A great deal of this no-citizenship-no-vote-for-Roman-Catholics agitation was rampant during the presidential campaign of 1840, resulting in Van Buren's defeat by Harrison whose demise, a month to the day of his taking office, afforded an appropriate moment for John England's summation “On American Citizenship.”

In the frenzy to defeat Van Buren, a Baltimore editor, General Duff Green of the *Pilot and Transcript*, took pains to recall that as secretary of state under Jackson, Van Buren had committed the grave indiscretion of sending a letter to the pope, for no other reason, this editor implied, than not only to curry the Catholic vote, but to import more and more Catholic votes for his own future benefit. Van Buren's letter, which the *United States Catholic Miscellaney* published in full, had assured His Holiness that in the United States, Roman Catholics “. . . are at perfect liberty, and that they enjoy entire exemption from coercion in every possible shape upon the score of religious faith. . . .”

General Duff Green admonished his subscribers that it was not to be presumed that the pope withheld this letter from Catholic Europe, “Hence Catholic immigration to the United States was necessarily coupled with the idea of protection from the government.” He further warned that Van Buren's letter would hasten the anticipated day of religious

and civil revolution here which was a popish plot to ruin the republic in favor of the establishment of a Roman Catholic monarchy. Therefore: (1) Catholics should be disenfranchised; (2) if Van Buren won the election it would be a victory for the pope in which event the Catholics of America must be severely punished. As added weight for his argument, Green (and some of his contemporaries, too) informed his readers that Dagger John England had been appointed, by the pope, inquisitor general of the United States.

As a matter of fact, General Duff Green was riding the wrong rail, but the emotional state of the nation was such as to nourish the most enormous lie as stanchly as it should cherish divinely revealed truth. This tension had its roots in Old Hickory's administration which, after the traditional eight years, which even one of his dominant will did not dare increase, he graciously turned over to Van Buren, whom he had groomed more deliberately than he had the national chaos which Van Buren also inherited.

Andrew Jackson, "King Andrew" to his enemies, was popular with the masses ever suspicious of wealth. Van Buren, his choice, reaped the harvest of Jackson's popularity by election. The "Reign of Andrew Jackson" had been marked by quarrels with his cabinet; with Chief Justice John Marshall and the Supreme Court; with alienation from his vice-president, John C. Calhoun; with a vote of censure in the Senate which his friends had expunged from the *Senate Journal*; with the forced resignation of Duane, secretary of the treasury, because he would not issue the order to withdraw public funds from the Bank of the United States. Jackson's little group of intimates, known as the "Kitchen Cabinet," persuaded him this institution was a greedy monopoly and helped him find a replacement for Duane who would and did obey his orders; but Jackson's nomination of this "yes man" (the Roman

Catholic!), Roger B. Taney, was not confirmed by the Senate.

In this way, King Andrew, without any such intention, opened the tap which brought forth the financial panic of 1837. It had been an era of wild speculation; a national debt did not exist and surplus funds sent wild dreams into wilder realization. Thus setting the stage for a crash scene, Jackson like Jefferson handed the direction of the act over to Van Buren from whom he exacted a pledge to follow the Jackson school of histrionics.

He did, with the inevitable result — disaster. Banks failed, hard money disappeared, prices soared, business was prostrate, unemployment grew, construction ceased. No country of Europe would risk a loan to the United States; fear permeated the masses so loyal to Jackson and the wealthy as well who now had the hollow comfort of crying "I told you so!"

This should have been sufficient background for the 1840 presidential contest whose theme song was "Tippecanoe and Tyler, too," and which in noisy enthusiasm, enormous torchlight processions, conventions, crowds, oratory, and hysteria exceeded any previous campaign. All the miseries of the day were laid to Van Buren: if Harrison were elected prosperity would miraculously return. Every possible issue was introduced into the frenzied confusion, including slavery by New England ever jealous of the economy of the South; and religion by Harrison's partisans because, ten years previously, Van Buren had written a brief letter to the pope.

In fear and spluttering bitterness this letter was flaunted far and wide in certain proof that the Catholic vote alone would return Van Buren to office, and in total oblivion to the fact that there were then 16,000,000 non-Catholic votes in the country to 800,000 Catholic votes! Nevertheless the emotional orgy insisted that by order of the pope, by order of the archbishop of Baltimore, by order of Dagger John Eng-

land, every Catholic would vote for Van Buren who was blamed for the depression and the mass unemployment. Down with immigration! Down with paupers and Catholics! Fanatically the essence of the "Charleston idea" flowed from editorial pens. In Pennsylvania, Barton, leader of the Quakers, openly organized them in favor of Mr. Harrison, and was unmolested for so doing. Not a Catholic priest or bishop organized so much as one small Catholic parish for Van Buren, but the Catholics were daily scorched in this plethora of fear. "Catholics know their political rights too well," John England spoke in the columns of the *Miscellaney*, "to receive the dictation of any clergyman." But the *Miscellaney* was a Catholic paper. "Who would expect to find the truth in that?" sneered the mob.

So, no matter how often or where the truth had been stated it was now shouted down: it was of no purpose to the anti-Catholic faction; it took all the starch out of that magnanimous refrain ". . . no objection to Catholics providing they keep out of politics." Now on Friday, May 14, 1841, a national day of fasting and prayer because the victor of this campaign had been so quickly and so suddenly removed from the scene of conflict, a day six months removed from the hysteria of the past November's election, John England in Boston reaffirmed once again the truth: that this republic and Catholicism could exist side by side and that the Roman Catholic could be a loyal American citizen.

Still lying on the tables of many New England parlors were copies of *The Southern Observer*, a Lutheran publication originating in Baltimore. After reading the report and comments of England's address "On American Citizenship" in the *Boston Transcript* of current date, Bostonians, still suspicious, could turn to the year-old copy of *The Southern Observer* and reinforce their old convictions which the Bishop's elo-

quence and logic may have set to tottering momentarily, finding comfort in the words of the Lutheran editor:

Bishop England is an Irishman of not very ancient importation, a legate of His Holiness at Rome, a man of whose talents the Romanists are astonishingly proud, and whose praise is constantly in their mouths, but whose plethoric habit of body, and broad, full, ruddy face, furnish abundant manifestations that the animal nature preponderates immensely over the intellectual; this bishop, who arrogantly signs himself with a cross or a dagger, JOHN, Bishop of Charleston (South Carolina), is in the field of politics, and has undertaken to instruct us in matters appertaining to the administration of our free republican government.

Bishop England talks in his letter about "republican simplicity." What a burlesque for a man who is the willing vassal of the proudest and most voluptuous and gorgeous potentate on earth (we mean the Pope, of course) to prate to us about republican simplicity; a man who occasionally appears in the Cathedral of Baltimore, decked out in all the costly trappings and rich and extravagant vestments of priestly pride . . . for such a man to gossip to us about republican simplicity and to undertake to instruct us how to remedy the political evils, imaginary or real, which are said to afflict our country — how supremely ridiculous, how insolent, how hard to bear with due composure.

How strange the ire of this Lutheran editor. John England's explanations of the relationship of Catholicism and government had necessarily been detailed and lengthy: but this editor complains of his "instruction." That had been brief indeed. The only hope for the ultimate success of the American experiment in government, he had said, could be found in the religion given to the world by Jesus Christ.

.. 9 ..

I know many slaves who would not accept their freedom; I know some who have refused it; and though our domestic slavery upon the whole must be regarded as involuntary, still the exceptions are not so few as are imagined by strangers.

* * * *

The situation of a slave under a humane master, insures to him food, raiment, and dwelling, together with a variety of little comforts; it relieves him from the apprehensions of neglect in sickness, from all solicitude for the support of his family, and in return, all that is required is fidelity and moderate labor. I do not deny that slavery has its evils, but the above are no despicable benefits. Hence I have known many freedmen who have regretted their manumission.

* * * *

Slavery, then, Sir, is regarded by that church of which the Pope is the presiding officer, not to be incompatible with the natural law, . . . but not so the "slave trade," or the reducing into slavery the African or the Indian. . . .

*John, Bishop of Charleston, to the
Hon. John Forsyth, Secretary of State,
United States, October 7, 1840.*

◆ ◆ ◆ ◆

*"... There is neither bond nor free; . . . you are all one in
Christ Jesus."* *St. Paul to the Galatians*

THROUGH the machinations of the Native-American party and his avid campaign managers, General Harrison had the distinction of being the first avowedly antislavery candidate

for the presidency. Never hesitant to censure with rancor any American citizen who "meddled in politics" if that citizen were also a Roman Catholic prelate, partisans of both presidential aspirants in the 1840 campaign sought expressions, and appearances in Georgia and Michigan, from and of Bishop England. The invitations were issued in a spirit of political expediency. The citizen-prelate rejected all of them. In one refusal he recommended the best solution of the national chaos would be a reversal of practices, to prefer industry to speculation; labor to cabal; economy to ostentation; patient and persevering frugality to dissipation.

These high principles were easier named than achieved and in no way alleviated the dilemma of the southern voters who had either to select Harrison, an enemy to their particular regional economy, or Van Buren who, they believed, had sought to curry favor with the pope. One candidate would liquidate their property, the other would liquidate the republic itself to establish a Roman Catholic monarchy. Such was the momentum of political palaver in 1840. Of course its purpose was to confuse, to render inoperative the processes of clear thinking and incipient logic.

More, this propaganda struck directly at the South's two nerve centers: her slavery and her anti-Catholic prejudice, both heirlooms, both "family traditions," the one of regional, the other of national scope.

Since the adoption of the Constitution domestic slavery had been a worrisome contradiction of its principles. Slaves were men, women, and children, the greatest handiwork of the Creator: they had immortal souls. Yet, as verified by the famous Supreme Court decision of March 6, 1857, it was national opinion that the framers of the Constitution had not regarded Negroes as citizens. Therefore, those moralists who persisted that in the eyes of God there is no "white supremacy"

had made small headway by 1840. The inescapable truth of their assumption took on a character of self-righteous, political expediency when mouthed by northern abolitionists. For no abolitionist ever offered himself in exchange for a Negro's freedom, a practice not infrequent among Christians of earlier centuries. Nor has the sentiment yet obtained with sincerity in America for not even in Mississippi, itself, is "white supremacy" more doggedly upheld than in Boston, Massachusetts, the wellspring of antislavery expressions in 1840. Not without deliberate intent did John England, in 1841, tell the Bostonians that the success of the American experiment in government rested upon the practice of the religion of Jesus Christ. This religion has no least orthodox tenet supporting the supremacy of one race over another.

General Harrison's supporters had not only Van Buren's 1830 letter to the pope to drag through the campaign, but on December 3, 1839, Pope Gregory XVI put his name and the seal of the fisherman's ring to an apostolic letter which reached this country through Catholic pulpit and press, early in 1840. Its title and subject matter referred to the slave trade. Expediently seizing upon the title without troubling to investigate the contents, politicians shot this letter over the southern states thus further stiffening anti-Catholic prejudice. This apostolic brief censured the slave trade, and that alone. This trade had been a felonious offense in the United States since 1808; therefore the papal pronouncement could have no possible reference to the internal affairs of this country, unless it were to approve indirectly the prohibition of this traffic in human beings. Had this inference been preferred by the anti-Catholic forces, no doubt the pope would have been condemned for being so slow to come to the senses of the United States in the matter. But such an interpretation would not have served the purpose of the 1840 campaigners; so this

papal brief was exhibited as being a gradual, stealthy trespass upon southern property rights.

Inevitably the Bishop of Charleston was drawn into the fray. How he maintained his charity, his patience, and his fortitude cannot be imagined, unless one reverts again to a meditation upon his unfailing co-operation with these gifts of the Holy Ghost. In the retrospect of a century it seems his refutation of the charges of Samuel B. Morse were barely concluded when he was involved in refuting the malicious implications crystallized in the General Duff Green accusations that the Catholic vote was ". . . as a matter almost of *certainty*," as Morse had expressed it, under the control of priests. For over a decade John England had been engaged in refutation of this false premise, and so, naturally, for over a decade he had been accused of "meddling in politics." Now Martin Van Buren's secretary of state, Mr. John Forsyth, gave him an opening to "meddle again" — or to keep silent while the honorable secretary of state vilified a papal pronouncement.

Addressing the "people of Georgia" in August, 1840, Mr. Forsyth charged the "Anti-Masonic and Abolitionist" forces of nominating Mr. Harrison, dogmatically declaring, ". . . there is a union of sentiment if not co-operation hostile to Southern interests between the Abolitionist supporters of General Harrison, the British Government, the London World's Convention against slavery, the brutal O'Connell, and His Holiness, the Pope."

It could not have been without a deep sigh of human exasperation that Bishop England again picked up his pen.

"This, Sir, is the fate of the Catholics of the United States," he wrote Mr. Forsyth, "they are the shuttle-cock for the political parties of the States — threatened by the myrmidons of General Harrison's party today, and placed in a false position by Mr. Van Buren's Secretary of State the next day. There is,

however, at least one of that body who will not submit to the infliction from either one party or the other, from friend or foe, without endeavoring, however humble his place in the republic, and however powerless his pen, to demand more just conduct towards the body to which he has the honor to belong, even though he may not succeed in obtaining what he seeks."

Not yet, though his apostolate was then in its twentieth year, had Americans become accustomed to a Catholic voice, generally that of the Bishop of Charleston, in rebuttal of anti-Catholic attacks. Freedom of speech, press, assembly, and conscience were guaranteed by the Constitution, but sixty-odd years after its adoption there were still intellects ossified into the colonial molds of slavery to propaganda and who therefore resented as audacious the fact that any Catholic voice would dare raise itself in defense of its faith. Attacks were still delivered with impunity. When they were answered, in their intemperate astonishment the assailants loudly cried, "Catholics should not meddle in politics." It seems to be that if one must be a Catholic, let him be — let him sink into such moral and religious degradation; but in politics let him be a pagan or a mute.

Mr. Forsyth's attack launched Bishop England upon his most arduous rebuttal; not because of any theological uncertainty, for as usual his letters were thorough, scholarly, replete with both Scriptural and pre-Christian references such as Plato, Aristotle, and kindred pagans: they were as concise as these qualities would permit. First he covered the documentary evidence, from such sources, for the legality of holding slaves; second he intended to show the history of the revival of slavery in the immediately preceding four or five centuries; third, he would discuss the condition of the colored population of the United States.

But the strongest soldier, the most valiant defender, the steadfastly loyal and loving child of God has physical limitations. John, Bishop of Charleston, was no exception. The apostolate of his pen, always a side issue because of the endless duties devolving upon his office and circumstance, would have occupied the full time of a less learned and less self-forgetting man. Annual visitations in his own diocese entailed three thousand-odd miles of the most uncomfortable sort of travel, poor accommodations, and worse meals. In 1841 he was compelled by the financial condition of his diocese to cross the Atlantic again to beg for assistance. The first of his letters on domestic slavery is dated September 29, 1840. They were incessantly interrupted by his many duties — finally, at last the greatest duty of his life, that of rendering an account of his stewardship to his Creator, interrupted them after the eighteenth, so that his pen never developed the second and third purposes which he had in mind. The third would have been of particular interest to American Catholics, even today, and might have taken a good bit of starch out of Harriet Beecher Stowe's hysterical aberration which, when meeting the author, Abraham Lincoln implied brought on the War Between the States.

It was the intention of Van Buren's secretary of state to show that the pope was an abolitionist, a careless blunder if he believed priests controlled votes, and also that Martin Van Buren could do with the Catholic vote in the interest of his re-election.

It did not take John England's sculptural pen long to show that the abolitionist was a fanatic and that fanaticism and Catholicism were not birds of a feather. He gave so many Old Testament references to show the historical background of legitimate, humane slavery, asserting that those who would

deny its religious legality should "prove distinctly that this (divine) sanction had been withdrawn," that the abolitionist faction among Protestants swiftly, hotly retorted: "If the Bible allows slavery it should be amended." John England showed that from the Apostles down it had been Christian teaching that slaves should obey their masters, and masters should be kind to their slaves, as though that obedience and that kindness were rendered to Christ, Himself. And he pointed out the truth which could not be denied, that so effectively did Catholic slaves follow this teaching that their market value, especially in Maryland, the cradle of American Catholicism, was ten to twenty or more dollars above that of the non-Catholic slave.

"I have been asked by many," he said, "whether I am friendly to the existence or continuation of slavery. I am not — but I also see the impossibility of now abolishing it here. When it can and ought to be abolished is a question for the legislature and not for me," added this "meddler in politics."

In this sentiment John England showed himself a southern sympathizer, for this was the attitude of the South toward its problem. And just as we thank our next-door neighbors to keep their noses out of our private affairs, so the South felt about the busybody northern agitation over one of her distinct and peculiar domestic dilemmas.

But there were two circumstances beyond Bishop England's control which made the South suspicious of his avowal and therefore fertile for the growth of the insinuations of the Georgian, Hon. John Forsyth. The South should have applauded the Bishop of Charleston when he stated, ". . . no truth is to us more evident than that the intermeddling of Northern Abolitionists has tended to retard the generous and humane efforts which the Southern proprietors were spon-

taneously making for the increase of the comforts and the amelioration of the moral condition of the slave." But Georgia's John Forsyth said Catholics were abolitionists.

Again the South could have shown John England loyal affection when, writing of slavery, he averred, ". . . it is impossible that it should be abolished for a considerable time to come without the most injurious results, not merely to property but to society." But Georgia's John Forsyth, secretary of state, not a bishop nor a moralist, said Catholics were abolitionists. Not yet has the land of the northern abolitionists had the courage to follow through a victory of arms with the practice of social justice for which those arms were presumably taken up.

John England shot an arrow into the heart of these pseudo-moralists of the North, many of them grown rich on the profits of selling slaves in years gone by: ". . . having no sacrifice of their own to make," he wrote, they "call upon the South, in the name of humanity, to emancipate those whose price has enriched them." Nor did he hesitate to imply that while the slave trade had been abolished in 1808, many of the New England traders were still stuffing their pockets with now illicit profits. In an editor's footnote in the *United States Catholic Miscellaney* (Vol. xx, p. 119) he said, ". . . we have had given to us the names of zealous and noisy abolitionists at the North, who we are told, make largely at the present day by the [slave] traffic. We have ourselves seen in ports in the United States, within ten years, several vessels fitted out evidently for this trade, and notoriously employed in it, and owned by our northern merchants, but against which legal proof could not be exhibited."

If only John England had been a magnetic Protestant minister instead of a Roman Catholic bishop! (Or can people hear from the lips of a sincere minister of the Gospel, regardless

of professed religious loyalty, that which they do not want to hear?)

"Whatever our wishes respecting slavery may be," he told Mr. Forsyth, "we are firmly of the opinion that in all the South there is less cruelty and injustice committed against the slave by his owner than there is committed by the American abolitionist against the American slave owner."

If only he had not been a member of the despised Church of Rome which "always meddled in politics," how the South would have championed this defender of its inherited economy. How humiliating must have been his words to those who sincerely believed the pope was the "Beast of Babylon" and Catholics moral degenerates. For the sentiments and convictions of John England on the matter of domestic slavery in our southern states were the sentiments and convictions of the southern aristocrat and slave owner then, and his descendants today. For his expression of these convictions, and his sustaining of them by endless scriptural proofs of the religious legality of slavery, John England should have been cherished by the southerner whose native chivalry should have risen as one great strength to shout down his detractors. But as the Church in America itself, so the southern gentleman left John England to fight alone without so much as one word of approbation, but hundreds of vilification.

Among the latter was the attack of a native of Georgia, only indirectly personal for it censured the papal letter of Gregory XVI. But because of two events beyond his control, one authored by his ecclesiastical superior, the pope, and another by a former countryman of his, Bishop England's sincerity in his stand on domestic slavery was suspected. Samuel B. Morse was a citizen of whom Charleston was proud. He had written much of the "trickery" of the Jesuits; giving him more credence than John England, the latter now suffered

from Morse's "exposures" because the City of Gentlemen trusted the veracity of Morse more implicitly than that of England.

By order of Pope Gregory XVI, John England had been obligated to negotiate with the president of Haiti, a Catholic Negro, relative to the condition of the Church in Haiti. Unknown to him until they appeared on this side of the water, the Irish liberator, Daniel O'Connell, had flooded the South with antislavery pamphlets; and O'Connell's use of language in any cause was not calculated to soothe as it chastised.

The pope asked John England to make an investigation of the condition of the Church in the black republic of the West Indies. The Bishop pointed out that his diocese held the greatest population of Negro slaves in the world, and that therefore he was not the happiest selection for this commission. But the pope overrode his objections, stating, "Though the Southern States of your Union have had domestic slavery as an heir-loom, whether they would or not, they are not engaged in the *negro traffic*." In obedience to his will, John England fulfilled this commission from the Holy Father although not without protest from many prominent South Carolinians, not Catholics, but devoted friends of the Catholic Bishop of Charleston. As they prophesied, Catholicism's enemies in this country were quick to seize upon this co-operative relationship between a Negro and a white man. It is difficult to understand why the Holy Father, if at such a distance he could at all appreciate the temper of public opinion, should so embarrass his subject and deliberately increase his already heavy burden of prejudice in the field he had given him to harvest. It can only be that having himself the true Christian ideal relative to racial and color distinctions, the pope could not fully comprehend the blind doctrine of "white

supremacy" which today psychologists demonstrate as an inferiority complex, natural and defensive on the part of the minority race of the entire world.

The abolitionists, too, were not slow to make capital of John England's appointment as envoy to President Boyer of Haiti. They framed a petition which they sent to Port-au-Prince asking the Negro president not to recognize the American bishop because he was not adverse to southern slavery and was an avowed enemy of Negroes. In his first letter to Mr. Forsyth, John England refers to this fact and points out the secretary of state's consequent inconsistency in claiming ". . . His Holiness, and by implication, me and my flock, as allied with the Abolitionists. . . ." In the same letter he shows the inconsistency of the abolitionists themselves in opposing him ". . . for having reproached Mr. O'Connell's assaults upon our planters more than eleven years ago." Also in this first letter he clearly drew the distinction between the slave trade and domestic slavery, and was not hesitant to express to the secretary of state, his surprise that Mr. Forsyth could not detect this distinction for himself.

"All our theologians have from the earliest epoch sustained, that though in a state of pure nature all men are equal, yet the natural law does not prohibit one man from having dominion over the useful occupation of another as his slave," he explained, "provided this dominion be obtained by a just title." He went on to demonstrate beyond the doubt of unbiased reason that this proviso — a just title — was not only alien to, but utterly impossible to the slave trade which was the whole and entire subject treated in the apostolic letter against which Mr. Forsyth had publicly complained and with which, without an intelligent assimilation of its contents, he had placed the pope and all Catholics in the heart of the abolitionists' camp.

Nor did John England fail, in this first epistle to the secretary of state, to nominate the two great principles set forth in Gregory XVI's apostolic letter of December, 1839: first that it was inconsistent with Christianity to reduce to slavery those who have their national freedom, and to inflict upon them all the consequent evils of bondage; and second, that it was not consistent with Christian conduct to treat those in servitude with cruelty, or with undeserved harshness, oppression, or injury; that not only their physical, but their moral necessities should be provided for by those to whom they belong. He insisted that the papal document did not in any word, phrase, sentence, or paragraph, censure those who, without their own selection, had been placed under the necessity of managing their property with a delicacy, a responsibility, and a perplexity "to which those who vilify us are strangers."

In his letter of October 7, 1840, Bishop England demonstrated that man is master of his own liberty; that if he voluntarily wishes to exchange this for the undeniable benefits of justly administered slavery such was his right: "Thus a voluntary state of slavery is not prohibited by the law of nature." And it may be further implied by his own words that while the domestic slavery of the South was not historically voluntary, it had at the time he wrote become for many Negroes a state preferable to freedom. More, he was careful to point out that slavery was applicable to the body only — that a man's soul could not be held in bondage, ". . . hence, the master could not require him to lay aside the practice of religion, or to do an immoral act, but he could command his labor, and was bound to give the necessities of life." There is no crime in having a slave, he insisted, but there is crime in cruelty and oppression.

To John England, as to his Lord and Master, the soul of the Negro was equally as precious, equally as worth salvation

as that of the white man. He habitually offered his Sunday Mass for the Negro. At an appointed hour every Sunday evening the cathedral of Charleston was reserved for their exclusive use. Here he instructed them. This preference occasioned the necessity of preaching two sermons Sunday evenings, one for the Negroes and one for the whites. If, as sometimes happened, he was too exhausted to preach two evening sermons, he chose to disappoint the white and wealthy, the talented and powerful who thronged St. Finbar's — never his poor colored congregation. And among the poor he performed many baptisms while the white and wealthy often deferred this grace, though nonetheless convinced of its saving benefits, for a more propitious day — a day seldom more specifically described and often, like "tomorrow," one that never came.

He interested himself in the education of the Negro, likewise. In the face of great opposition he opened a school for free Negroes — the designation was not his choice, but the law of the state, for the South Carolina slave code prohibited the education of slaves. After being in Charleston for fifteen years he found that many of the free Negroes had formerly been Catholics, but through a secular education afforded by the various sects they had lost their faith entirely. With the aid of two of his seminarians and two Ursulines as teachers, he opened a Negro school. As is usual with Catholic schools of all descriptions, the superior instruction and discipline attracted many not of the faith. When there was no Catholic school for free Negroes, the sectarian schools made no complaints that Catholic Negroes patronized their denominational schools; but once Catholic Negroes had a school of their own, the sects raised a great hue and cry for not only Catholic, but Protestant Negroes attended. In the first month after its opening, eighty-four children, and many of their parents,

returned to the Sacraments. Although it was the mass hysteria over the abolition tracts which ultimately closed all schools for free Negroes, as usual the Catholic enterprise was the scape-goat, the Catholic effort and Catholic success released the spleen of others.

So again John England took up his pen to address the presiding officer of the South Carolina Association Seminary on July 29, 1835.

Now I find it rumoured that the existence of this school, which I desired and determined always to have open to the inspection of every respectable Carolinian, is not pleasing to several of my fellow citizens. I believe it is notorious that it has been denounced in public print, upon sectarian grounds. My disposition is not to act in opposition to the wishes of any respectable portion of the community in regard to any political, civil or social subject, even under the permission of the law, but I do not think that when I act only in the same manner as other citizens are allowed to do, that I alone, should be selected as the object of complaint or animadversion.

There are other schools in this city similar to that which I established. If it be the wish of the citizens that they should be discontinued, let that wish be signified to all indiscriminately by the City Council, by the South Carolina Association, and I shall not be found backward in sacrificing my opinion to their advice.

I trust that such of my fellow citizens as read the above . . . , and consider that almost every congregation in the city has its school for the instruction of its coloured population, will not be disposed to express themselves of me in the terms in which I understood some have, without due reflection indulged.

“Without due reflection indulged” — has due reflection been indulged in the century since this first bishop of the Church of Rome came to our Southland? Has the posterity of the population to whom he ministered and in whose service he gave his best, and his life, come to intellectually appreciate the exhibitions of history and reason he so ceaselessly and so patiently afforded them? Has the southern gentry ever acknowledged his position in favor and in defense of

their economy? Has the Catholic Church in the South been suffered without prejudice and without slander because the southern intellect and natural reason has seen the truth and logic of his message even though the southern will could not accompany understanding with acceptance? Is there a portion of the southern population, led by emotional evangelical witnesses, which still believes Catholic priests are devils incarnate with stunted horns and tails, moral degenerates who demand as their right the spoils of every bridal night; terrified children who are taught that the habit of a nun is the cloak of a wicked witch? Put these questions to any missionary priest laboring in the original diocese of Charleston, the Carolinas and Georgia, and receive a unanimous affirmative in response. No more than any other region of the world will or can the Southland be coerced into acceptance of Catholicism as a personal faith—for such faith must be prayed for because it is a gift of God. But the intelligent South, lay and non-Catholic, owes to the first bishop of Charleston an enormous debt of gratitude which can best be paid by a study of his writings and an intellectual purge of the unfounded, unproved, and un-Christian calumnies against this ancient and historically first Christian Church.

And the Roman Catholics of the South have no less a debt of gratitude than the non-Catholic citizenry. This can be best paid by a familiarity with the writings of this American Christopher, an emulation of his patient understanding, his courage, and his fortitude. In the century since his death there have been many American Christophers guided by the same truths which guided John England, enough to leaven society. The term "Christopher" implies a co-operation, by cleric and layman, with Christ: a co-operation similar to that of the first bishop of Charleston.

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. . . for God resisteth the proud, but to the humble He giveth grace. . . . But the God of all grace, Who hath called us unto His eternal glory in Christ Jesus, after you have suffered a little, will Himself perfect you, and confirm you and establish you.

First Epistle of St. Peter

It is now many years since I was called by God . . . to administer the affairs of His church in this diocese. Throughout that period, I have encountered great difficulties; but He has assisted me with strength and graces for the performance of my duties, beyond my natural capability. On some occasions, fortunately for me, I have corresponded with those graces; on others, unfortunately, I have not.



AT THE close of his controversy with the Reverend Mr. Richard Fuller, who then so urgently pleaded with John England to forsake his faith and lead his entire flock into Protestantism, the Bishop wrote, "I am anxious to lay down my pen. Truth and principle demanded much from me."

But in 1840 he had had to take it up again. Truth and principle demanded that he exhibit to the secretary of state and the American people the history, the religious sanction, the distinctions of human slavery. This time he did not lay down his pen; it dropped from his weary, lifeless fingers.

Those fingers, prompted by a deathless loyalty to his faith

and obediently recording the dictates of his retentive mind, have left for posterity a timeless testimony in support of that Institution founded by the God-Man on the rock of the fisherman, Peter. The extent and topical contents of John England's library is lost to posterity as is the identity of the "friend" whose library he often consulted. But the result of his mind's absorption of his researches may be found in his *Works*, unhappily now long out of print. For not only do these give testimony of his faith and its practical application to human conditions and problems, but also found there are passages relative to the preservation of the American form of government as pertinent today as they were one hundred years ago.

It is, indeed, now many years since God has called him from the American scene, but John England still reminds us that our "Republic is always in danger from its enemies," who will employ the centuries-old calumnies, vilifications, and malicious falsifications against the Roman Catholic Church to hide from the people the real enemies of the nation. The Church will always be the scapegoat, he insisted, to divert public attention from the real dangers; yet never, he challenged, in the recorded history of the United States has the nation ever been in danger because of the freedom permitted the Roman Catholic Church. The provable truth of his statement throws grave suspicion upon those who would deny it — the suspicion that these are the national enemies within.

As recently as 1946 in that portion of his former diocese known as North Carolina, the president emeritus of a venerable southern university told a Methodist men's club: "The Roman Catholic Church is the greatest despot the world has ever known. People of this belief must worship the Pope and in Italy some years ago forgiveness could be bought before committing sin or breaking a law of the state." Echo

of the Reverend Mr. Fuller, Baptist pastor of Beaufort, South Carolina, now dust.

The Morals and Dogma of the Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite of Freemasonry as "prepared for the Supreme Council of the Thirty-Third Degree for the Southern Jurisdiction of the United States, and published by its authority," dogmatically asserts in its official text: "Catholicism was a vital truth in its earliest ages, but it became obsolete, and Protestantism arose, flourished and deteriorated. Each was truth for a time." "All are truths of Period, and not truths for eternity."

It cannot be imagined that John England, once Roman Catholic bishop in the Masonic "Southern Jurisdiction," would have failed to point out the objective reality and permanence of truth which, because such truth originates with God, is changeless. A contemporary prelate of Denver stepped into Bishop England's worn shoes and did just this.

In a pen controversy with one who described himself "one of the people of the South" which appeared in the columns of *The Gospel Advocate* then published in Boston, Bishop England answered the charge that "... the Pope assumes the right to dispense from obligations of oaths, contracts and agreements" (as Stalin does today) by asking: "Does our friend in the South mean to create religious dissensions in America by exciting unfounded prejudices against Roman Catholics? Does he regret the absence of divisions among Catholics? Would he draw here and wield that blood stained sword which has spread such ruin through Europe?"

It is astonishing to realize how pertinent these questions are when lifted from *The Gospel Advocate* and addressed presently to the world's enemy of peace which is doing its best to exterminate the Catholic Church. Circulating among us, enjoying all the benefits and freedoms of the "American way,"

this enemy has worked diligently to establish "unfounded prejudices against Roman Catholics," and this enemy of our republic has found many Americans to aid him, whether knowingly or otherwise remains between them and God. It is the enemy's avowed purpose to "draw here and wield that blood stained sword which has spread such ruin through Europe."

And who, among us, helps the enemy? Their number is legion. The president emeritus before mentioned; the publishers of the *New Age* and its companion *Clip Sheet*; the editors of *The Converted Catholic Magazine*, Judases all, and, even as in the past, *The Protestant* magazine, which is still a humiliation to Protestants of good faith. These are only a few; the patriotic reader can extend the list indefinitely.

Were John England to name the turbulent issue of the 1940's he would bring all his pen and platform power to bear on the grave warning that this is no time for the anti-Catholic by-passes of the 1840's. Now there is a beast to fear, and his mark is plainly visible over half of Europe. Although every detractor of Catholicism has had more than ample opportunity to learn the truth he still devotes his energy and influence to the elimination of an imaginary beast.

That a man as busy as Bishop John England, found the time to take up his pen so often is amazing; yet equally so is the neglect of its product and himself by a posterity still indirectly benefiting from his labors. Every word, line, and paragraph had to be written by those fingers so anxious to lay down the pen. "My occupations," he mildly protested, "are such as to leave me little time and to expose me to perpetual distractions and successive interruptions."

His pen was not exclusively engaged in controversy. Readers of the *Miscellaney* found in its pages revealing historical articles, detailed explanations of many ceremonies of the

Church, particularly of the Mass. In his necessarily extended controversial features he had the inherent knack of ending each installment on a note of suspense thus leaving friend and foe in a state of impatient anticipation from week to week. On one occasion when his opponent quoted a spurious source to refute him, John England exposed the falsity, observing, "It is very awkward to have a translation appear six years before the original."

The American Church recalls John, Bishop of Charleston, as the "Father of our Provincial Councils," but Catholic writers know him better as the Father of American Catholic letters. His *United States Catholic Miscellaney* finally succeeded in keeping its head above the red ink after going down twice. By 1833 twelve more Catholic weeklies were in circulation, the first four of these appearing in 1829. These, and the *Miscellaney*, circulated throughout the then twenty-five states of the Union. These states and additional territories harbored among the population over six hundred thousand Catholics.

The increase of Catholic immigration and the growth of the Catholic press sired by the *Miscellaney* gave the Evangelicals grave concern. Summarizing this double growth, the editor of the *Southern Telegraph* published in Richmond, wrote in dismay:

We were perfectly wearied with examining falsehood, blasphemy, filth, calumny and despotism, week after week — and it eventually became so repugnant to our feelings, to contend with ignorance, infidelity, baseness and blasphemy, that we dismissed the whole clan, with a sincere desire no more to be polluted by the Babylonish contagion. But yet in this country, the increasing number and variety of the Romish publications constitute a topic of very serious and alarming interest.

Then from his extensive reading of the Catholic periodicals which reached his desk he proceeded to give his opinions, three of which were:

The *United States Catholic Miscellaney* is printed in Charleston under the patronage of the Pope's chief Dominican for this Republic. It is a very wicked periodical, being in some respects worse than the *Boston Jesuit*; for it contains the same deadly poison, but sweetens the baneful drug so as to render it palatable; while the *Jesuit's* potion is so bitter that it hinders the reception.

The Truth Teller issued in New York, in every respect the contrary to its hypocritical name.

The Metropolitan — a monthly magazine of 40 pp., 8vo., patronized by the Dragon, and the Beast; and superintended by the *Most Arch* Roman himself: and his Jesuitical Fraternity.

Even within Catholic ranks there was opposition to the expanding Catholic press as there had been to the *Miscellaney* itself. But, as Monsignor Guilday says, John England

realized that social and political adjustments were taking place all about him, and that unless the Church were kept alive to the tremendous changes being wrought in American life . . . the Faith would not retain within the fold all who were its children, nor make the advance it should into the ranks where error and prejudice ruled.

Today, witnessing the numerous descendants of his *Miscellaney* and their devotion to "the American way," Bishop England's "realization" is no less pungent.

Another parallel is interesting. As has been previously related, one of the papers especially founded to nullify the effects of the Catholic press and the Catholic Church was *The Protestant* which, as today, was not welcomed by all non-Catholics. At the time of its inception it was editorially chastised by the secular press because "its scurrility was so gross as to disgust many members of the [Protestant] church and advocates of the cause whose interests its establishment was intended to promote."

And for the Catholic laity of today an editorial observation of John England, Father of American Catholic letters, remains timely:

One of the most effectual means whereby catholicity can be heard is in the circulation of Catholic Works: . . . It is apparent to every

Catholic that one of the great misfortunes under which "popery" labours is that debt of gratitude she owes to her revilers: which she never can cancel unless through the press. The power of the religious press is levelled with deadly aim against [the Church]. It teems daily and hourly with foul misrepresentations of her tenets: it labours to stamp the brand of ignominy on her professors. . . . In fact the abuse of "popery" is the passport to the literary market of many [authors] that would otherwise never be read, and when read only tend to vitiate the taste of the community. . . .

Whilst the unholy crusade is thus waged, what course should Catholics pursue? Array against it the moral force of Catholic truth. The spirit of the age is one of *enquiry*: let it be met. Let the best expositions of Catholic writers be generously patronized. Let the publishers of those works, where such slanders are triumphantly refuted, be supported in their exertions to give them extensive circulation. Let the calm, dignified tone of our Catholic chieftains be heard in our enlightened country, and through a pure press, and rely upon it, craven defamers will stand abashed. . . . Let the Catholic youth after the first elementary instruction in the rudiments of faith, master their contents [Catholic Works]. . . . Let him thus become a theologian; that without a blush he may be able to give an account of the Faith that is in him. His intercourse in life will bring him into contact with many honest enquirers, he should be able to solve their doubts, charitably correct their erroneous impressions. This course of reading he owes to the Church of which he is a member—to the name of Catholic which he professes—to his own honour as a freeman.

Is this Editor John England speaking or a contemporary Catholic editor? Editor England in the *Miscellaney* of December 15, 1832.

Having now come so far in this work, having given the reader the benefit of many aspects of John England, first bishop of Charleston, it should be as difficult for the reader as for myself to find the reason why John England was soon forgotten by his own generation. The *Miscellaney* continued until 1861 but almost immediately after his death it ceased to mention the name of its founder. Why?

The foregoing excerpts from his *Works* demonstrate that John England is not dead. He lives on today in the heart and

mind of many a prelate and laymen who, though they may not recall his name and hour, have inherited his zeal. Their zeal works no miracle — nor did his. The same prejudices, the same historical forgeries, the same misconceptions circulate today despite their ancient molds, rusts, and mushroom animus. John England's mission continues, the desire to bring the world to its Redeemer, the search for lost sheep. When the old attacks cease Catholicism will have lost its potency.

No matter how often they were delivered Bishop England answered the attacks. So must we. It is possible that God gives a reward for every answer, one remaining unknown to the answerer this side of eternity. The greatest appreciation — belated appreciation — we can render John England is emulation.

"Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof." This was the "sub-title" of the *United States Catholic Miscellaney*. The underbrush on our battlefield has been cleared by John England's tongue and pen. He saw to it that the American public, hostile to his faith, understood well this first amendment to the Constitution.

They called him John Dagger England — his enemies — referring to the cross of Christ which he incorporated in his signature as do all Catholic bishops. Dagger John, yet for the most part the southern gentry loved him, and loving him must have absorbed many of the principles which animated his everyday life. The slavery of the South deprived her of free immigration, of the leaven of the Catholic faith. So the South has been slow to accept Catholicism, slower to embrace it, yet in all the Union there cannot be found a people whose majority live Catholic principles as persistently as do the southerners. There are exceptions, yes, to this generalization just as there are many Catholics born and bred in the faith

who do not live it. But the South, sometimes derisively called the "Bible Belt," is Christian; in so far as she is purely so, she is Catholic. One of her own sons has said this. When the state of North Carolina would withhold from William Gaston a civil office because he did not subscribe to the "truths of the Protestant religion," this friend and benefactor of John England demonstrated without offense or censure that what is true in Protestantism must logically be true in Catholicism.

As a Christopher, a Christ-bearer in America, Bishop John England lived and preached those truths still lived, but not always preached, by southerners. And this to the great resentment of the devil whose reality is not questioned by the Christian southerner and who knows that to conquer Christians he must divide them: only a Christopher can unite them. The success of the devil or the Christopher rests upon man's free will, and neither devil nor Christopher can control the individual's use of this gift from his Creator. By his life and work John England has shown us what can be done, despite of enormous diabolical obstacles, if we but place our hand in God's and harmonize our will to His.

This was the "secret" of John England's life. He placed his hand in the hand of God and harmonized his will to the will of God even when this was an enigma to him, apparently working to his disadvantage as when he was sent to Haiti. Not without great cost to himself did he thus submit to his Creator.

For instance in August of 1840 he returned to Charleston utterly exhausted from a visitation of his diocese — his last. His doctor prescribed the luxurious restorative of rest, and surely his human nature must have been sorely tempted. But evidently God willed otherwise. The Bishop of Charleston could not afford to rest. He was desperately in need of money for

his diocesan projects. His personal fortune was not more than two hundred and fifty dollars. His "contributions received" did not promise any great and immediate increase of funds.

But as he watched the prosperity of the South increase he hoped, and always his hopes vanished as by the weekly collections he realized that either his people did not benefit from this prosperity, or benefiting had claims upon their purse which left them in a deflated condition every Sunday. His people thronged to St. Finbar's to hear him preach, proud to note there so many of their non-Catholic neighbors, but when he begged sudden deafness seemed to come over them. Some probably said, even as today, with a trace of impatience that they went to church to hear the word of God rather than the mundane difficulties of finance with which they were already personally familiar.

But toward the close of 1840, his health broken and his body weary, he knew that despite his exhaustion he would have to cross the ocean again. He could not retreat from all his projects, spiritual and educational, for lack of funds. Then came the Forsyth attack upon the pope. Fatigued, anxious, and now finding preaching a great and taxing exertion, still between September and November, 1840, he wrote his eighteen letters on domestic slavery: nor were they light, frothy, tit-for-tat epistles of a harried and exasperated man, but profound, searching, revealing, and necessarily extensive.

On the sixth of the following May he sailed for Ireland — to beg. There and on the Continent it had long been felt that John England deserved the "red hat." The very suggestion made him ill; he earnestly pleaded his genuine poverty to hush it; in a financial embarrassment such as his he could never afford to be a prince of the Church, John Cardinal England. More, he loved his people. He did not want to leave them.

Yet for all his begging, which never met with failure, he left a debt of thirty-four thousand dollars; his only financial asset being his personal two hundred and fifty dollars plus, possibly, the value of his library. As his successors labored to liquidate his debt they loudly deplored his puny resources. One by one his many educational projects were dropped in the interest of cutting expenses. What he had estimated as his greatest assets, his seminary and his schools, were now considered his diocese's greatest liabilities. Funds were much more elusive than the lost sheep John England had sought to bring back to the fold. His equal in talent and zeal was nowhere to be found; but praise of him died in his own generation which inherited "... the sorrows, toils, disappointments and embarrassment . . ." which had never checked his industry and zeal.

So it is quite to be expected that in these chapters we have "unearthed nothing new on England"; a century of indifference to him has made this unnecessary. If there be more data available than has been elsewhere recorded it is surfeit. May there have been here related enough of John England to wipe out the irritation of a thirty-four thousand dollar debt!

♦ ♦ 11 ♦ ♦

Let the motive extenuate whatever was unnecessarily severe in my judgment and conduct. I confess it has likewise happened, owing partly to the perplexities of my position, chiefly to my own impetuosity, that my demeanor has not always been as meek and courteous as it ever should have been; and that you have experienced rebuffs, when you might have anticipated kindness. Forgive me!

Tell my people that I love them, tell them how much I regret that circumstances have kept us at a distance from each other. . . . Be with them, be of them, win them to God. Guide, govern and instruct them. Watch as having to render an account of their souls, that you may do it with joy and not with grief.



Tell my people that I love them. . . .

THIS writer, too, is anxious to "lay down the pen" — and here is the appropriate place. But if it is put down, something will have been left unsaid which should at least be suggested. This book would suffer the same lack which other and more complete biographies of this most lovable Christopher suffer.

John England's conscientious biographers have omitted no detail of his full, active, and apostolic life. This book has omitted many. They have paid him every tribute, given him every enviable distinction — gentleman, scholar, churchman, patriot, *priest*. They have paid full homage to his genius as

orator and author; a champion of the rights of man; a champion of American democracy; a champion of the Catholic faith. They have exalted him above every American ecclesiastic of and since his time; they have shown that he not only merited the "red hat," but that there was every indication he might have received it—his material poverty and disinclination to accept such a crown mitigating against this distinction. One of his biographers, not a resident of his former diocese, complains that he was lost and wasted in Charleston. But for all of this, to my mind, his biographers have not given him bone, blood, and flesh. They have not told us what he was really like: and wisely, for how could they know? They have given us the public John England. What was the private John England like? Is it merely a woman's curiosity to peek behind the front door? In writing these pages, John England has come to life to me.

He had a sense of humor, saving in time of trouble, a leavening grace always. Was ever an Irishman lacking in this? In the midst of his most searching analyses, his humor creeps in to lighten a heavy passage or to ease the inevitable embarrassment of an opponent.

Temper? There must have been some of this in his nature, too. The swift, flash variety, uninvited, and dispersed as quickly as it had come. He, himself, admits "my own impetuosity."

Humility? The opposite of pride of which temper is fruit? This, too, he must have had, and in abundance, because he could acknowledge "my demeanor has not always been as meek and courteous as it ever should have been." And he further admits "unfortunately I have not" always co-operated with God's grace. Only one possessed of the virtue of humility could recognize and have the courage to admit lapses.

Temperament? Undoubtedly. On occasion he must have

been a difficult person to live with. This is a common fault of many idealists, persons of convictions and zeal. In decisions of immediate moment John England probably followed his own advices, sometimes with roughshod vigor. This is the temperament of the Irish; and does he not tell his clergy gathered about his deathbed, "you have experienced rebuffs when you might have anticipated kindness"?

Was he a man of sentiment? How could an Irishman be otherwise? His parents were married in the Church of St. Finbar in Cork. There in September, 1820, he was consecrated bishop: in Charleston he erected the Cathedral of St. Finbar (capacity sixty persons).

Was his judgment always above reproach? Contemplating the thirty-four thousand dollar debt and two annual pensions he had undertaken, his successor may have doubted on this point. John England admits his errors, too. "Let the motive extenuate whatever was unnecessarily severe in my judgment and conduct." He reminded his clergy, gathered about him in his last hours, of his "great difficulties" and "the perplexities of my position" not to excuse himself to them, but rather to crave their indulgence.

It is well that clothes do not make the man for those of the Bishop of Charleston fairly glittered in the usual spots of frictional wear. Frayed and threadbare they bespoke a poverty usually, if unreasonably, associated with illiteracy. That the sun warmed the earth of Charleston he knew well for his shoes were only tops, his soles bare to the ground. His poverty precluded any waste of time on the attention demanded in the procurement of fine clothes and the consumption of luxurious foods. "Comparatively little will suffice for food and raiment" he told the people he came to serve. The condition of his raiment and the modest fare of his table upheld this promise. Bishop England loved his people. They

had visible proof of his sacrifices for them. They had every confidence that their offerings were stretched as far as possible; that he reserved the barest minimum for his personal needs. His benefactors abroad who helped him so frequently and often so generously had never a cause to fear that, returned to Charleston, a portion of their largess was devoted to luxurious living or a lavish table. Wholeheartedly and cheerfully John England embraced the inevitable poverty of his mission, a condition deliberately chosen by Christ, Himself, and he was happily oblivious to any resulting privations.

Yet about his person, though his clothes were threadbare, and within his household, though it was not richly appointed, he must have been meticulous, even though he was too busy to find poverty a heavy cross. Also he must have had a concern with the niceties of social intercourse in a community where such niceties are still habitual. Particular about his household details, yes, with perhaps one exception, his library where his pen scratched incessantly over reams of paper.

Here, the outsider would claim, was the greatest disorder and confusion, a sloppy untidiness, unpardonable in a meticulous person. Books stacked every which way on his working table, books in Latin, French, or English — one language was as familiar to him as the other. Books stuffed with scraps of paper, old envelopes, a quill pen or a linen handkerchief marking pages of reference. The floor about his table scattered with finished pages of manuscript — or destroyed pages, those his sister, Johanna Monica, had “edited” by destruction: “— too strong, John, too strong, too stormy. I know. We have every reason to rage. We have had the bitter cup. Malice deserves all you say — but now you have said it that way — say it in another way, John. We must convince and win; we cannot condemn and lose.”

And admitting the wisdom and Christian charity behind

her gentle admonition, John England would nod, and re-write the page sliding it onto the floor in his haste to keep the continuity of his thought while he sought a new, clean sheet to continue. With Johanna Monica watching over his shoulder he would try to moderate the impatience within his breast.

But can this picture of confusion be reconciled with the claim that he was meticulous about his person, his household, the niceties of convention? Why not? Only in such a mess can many artists work. In such confusion all was order to the writer; he knew exactly, page and line, where every reference was. Time was of the essence to John England whose duties and occupations were as many as the interruptions to his work. Only in such disarray could he expedite the apostolate of his pen.

But to know that he was meticulous one has only to study his portrait, to note the sensitive features, particularly the mouth; to observe the hands, beautifully drawn by nature, the fingers long and tapering. These are some indication of his love of order. Another is his presentation of facts in a controversy. This indicates his attention to regularity and perhaps, too, the fruit of the two years he spent reading law before he entered the priesthood. Attention to detail was innate in John England.

And at the altar? Was he meticulous here, too? Surely his inborn sense of the appropriate was applied to the observance of the rubrics. Was he what we call today "a streamliner"? Did his familiarity with the Mass induce him to skip through it before his congregation could find the Gospel for the day in the English Missal he had translated for them? Did he hurry through for the sake of a few more moments in that messy study? Did the reverence resulting from his offering of the great Sacrifice, so immense, so awesome, so self-eliminating, depart from him after the first flush of Holy

Orders had faded in successive repetitions of this from-sun-to-sun re-enactment of the scene on Calvary, and the toil and poverty of a missionary priesthood had pierced his very heart? No priest as ardent as John England could gallop through this great Drama. No priest who loved his people as John England did could let them down like this.

No priest, busy, harassed and so often perplexed as was the Bishop of Charleston could rush through the Mass and at the same time, be found day after day, regardless of the manifold demands upon his time, for hours on his knees alone before the Blessed Sacrament in the Cathedral of St. Finbar, oblivious to all but that Presence in the cathedral; seeking from Him alone the help, the guidance, the inspiration, and the companionship he needed to meet his problems.

And in the confessional? Charleston is a hot and humid city — the climate is oppressive, enervating. Did he hurry along the penitents, anxious for a breath of pure, cooler air? Did he repeat to all, as if by boresome rote: "Keep trying — three Hail Marys — a good act of contrition"?

Hardly, for his confessional was always busy despite the general apathy of his flock. He administered to a socially downcast people. He had ever to keep before them the comparative proposition of popularity in heaven or popularity in the world. No Catholic in any country or era can have both. John England prepared his flock for eternal life while helping them to live their short span in this transient state. He had come to a people divided by schism, weakened by human censure, humiliated by disedifying clergy. He had to help them over their convalescence. More, he would have to account to God for every confession he heard, for every soul who wandered astray through his neglect. John England's confessional was not "streamlined" — by him. No doubt here he gave his most potent instructions, and from his confessional, by the

grace of God and the graces of his priesthood he sent forth troubled souls in peace, reconciled to the purging fires of this world, speechlessly grateful to God for the encouraging whisper of forgiveness which offered "another chance," and doused the flames of this life's crosses to smouldering embers.

In his informal moments John England shows himself subject to the same emotions as the rest of us; and why not? Was he not one of us? Human as we are? Subject to joy and happiness, pain and suffering, as we are? He was thrilled beyond measure to appear before the Congress in 1826; crushed by the death of Johanna Monica in 1827. He was justly irate over attacks loaded with venom; lovingly patient with attacks originating in blind ignorance. His Irish background, which was so interwoven with the struggle for Irish freedom, with the memory of his grandfather's four years in prison and his father's year as a fugitive, all because of their Catholic faith, cause him to be forever embittered against Great Britain, as millions of oppressed persons today will for generations be embittered against their oppressors.

That some who knew him could feel no love for him is evidence of his strength of character. John England permitted no man to intimidate him. He never apologized for his people — he loved them. Because he loved them he never permitted them to forget their obligations as American citizens and the fact that they *were* American citizens. From his most bitter assailants he won admiration for his Church, for his people, and for his self. No one could ever be indifferent to this man. Expediency was anathema to him; he was never a "yes man." That some who feared and despised his faith could admire his talents and his manhood is evidence that he lived that faith to the full.

That one, a most bitter antagonist because of his invincible ignorance, could travel from Beaufort to Charleston, could

enter the Cathedral of St. Finbar and stand in reverent respect before his supine, lifeless form is evidence that John England was what heaven, if not this world, calls a great man. The Reverend Mr. Richard Fuller stood so, mute as the body on the bier. It was not necessary now for the Reverend Mr. Fuller to call upon God to witness his tears; all who saw him grieving before the body of the Roman Catholic Bishop of Charleston saw his streaming tears, a generous, unashamed tribute to the man who was John England.

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